Fire Emblem Awakening: Robin's Journey

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Summary: This is the story of Robin: a man who wakes up with no memory, and takes up the role of tactician of the Shepherds. Through the bonds he forms and the struggles he overcomes, Robin will become the greatest man of his time and will lead the world into a new era of peace...or destruction. This is a loose adaption of the full campaign of FEA. Rated M for mature themes and language.

Chapter 1: Chapter 1

Author's Note/Introduction

(I do not own any characters, events, places, or anything else associated with Fire Emblem Awakening. They are the sole property of Nintendo and Intelligent Systems. This is pure fanfiction, made by the love of a fan, for the love of fans. So in other words...don't sue me. :D)

Welcome to all Fire Emblem fans who stumbled upon this story! I am a humble teenager, who fell in love with the fantastic game known as *Fire Emblem Awakening* a little more than a year ago. This story, called: *Fire Emblem Awakening: Robin's Journey* is a loose adaptation of the game, made to show the adventure of the Shepherds through the eyes of the main character Robin, and those he holds most dear.

My inspiration for writing this story has to go to a fellow author and Fire Emblem fan named metallover. He is currently finishing up his version of my version of the game's version of the game. (God, I love doing that to people. lol) His adaptation is beautifully done, and I encourage all readers of this story to check out his story as well, known as *Fire Emblem Awakening: Invisible Ties.*

Like metallover's story, this will span through the entire campaign of the game, so this will be a very long and chapter filled story. Also, I might warn you ahead of time this is my first fanfiction story ever, so I WILL have many screw ups along the way. I am always open to constructive criticism, and I hope to better myself as a writer through the process of writing this story. I want this to be a story that is created, not just by myself, but also you awesome people who read and review this story. You all are just as much creators of this story as myself. So together, it is my hope that we create something truly magical!

So, without further adieu, let me present to you *Fire Emblem Awakening: Robin's Journey.*

BlindingDarkness52 - 2014

A fated battle.

A dark, ancient palace holds inside the sacrificial altar.

A tall, yet frail and skinny sorcerer, full of dark energy, holds the key to the fate of the world. Chrom leads the battle to slay the sorcerer, Validar.

Chrom and another companion are running towards Validar, Chrom with his legendary sword Falchion in hand, while the other wielding a tome and robes similar to that of Validar. Validar unleashes a powerful blast of dark magic at the two, forcing Chrom to roll left, and the other right. Shining with the power of lightning magic, the other fires a powerful bolt of lightning at the sorcerer, hitting it's mark and causing Validar to double take. Chrom uses the opportunity to his advantage, charging up at Validar without a second thought, and running Validar through with the sacred blade Falchion.

Chrom leapt away as Validar's body started to dissolve into a cloud of dark magical flames while dropping to his knees, and then finally face down to the ground. Chrom smiled, looking at his companion and clasping the other's shoulder. "We did it! We've won. Thanks to you, we carried the day!"

Their celebration was short lived however, as Validar mustered up one last act of defiance. "NO! IT ISN'T OVER! IT CAN'T BE OVER! IT IS NOT WRITTEN! DAMN YOU! DAMN YOU BOTH!"

With one last yell of horrifical might, Validar sent out a massive ball of dark purple energy and flames at Chrom and the other. Chrom was slow to react, spinning haphazardly to face the oncoming ball of destruction. To the other, everything went in slow motion, and without thinking, he pushed Chrom out of the way to safety, while he himself took the brunt of the blast.

The other fell to the ground, and a dazed Chrom quickly ran to his side, pulling him to his feet. "Are you ok?" The other nodded, as they both turned to see the last remains of Validar's energy turning into a dark purple mist that faded away with his body.

Suddenly however, a force of great dark power entered the other's mind, as he felt an overpowering sense of rage consume him involuntary. Chrom turned to see the other, his eyes turned a sinister red, and his body now showing dark purple sparks darting in and out. "Hey, what's wrong..." was all Chrom was able to get out before a magical dagger of lightning pierced his chest. Chrom stumbled back, unable to dislodge the dagger from his chest. He looked up to stare at the other, obviously in shock over what he has just done, as the curse released it's hold for a moment. "This is not your...your fault" Chrom managed to mutter to the other, placing a limp hand on his shoulder as he slowly felt his legs

buckle and consciousness begin to fade. Blood started to form at Chrom mouth, as he struggled to get out "Promise me...you'll escape from this place. That you'll be...free. Promise...me..." At that, Chrom fell to the ground as darkness over took him. At that moment, a dark sinister laugh reminiscent of Validar echoed through the altar, and through the catacombs of the palace, and through the other's ears as he stood over the body of the man Chrom who he killed: his friend...

Author's Note

So, that is the prelude to the story! I originally planed to include the first real chapter of the game in this chapter as well, but I wanted to test the waters of how to properly upload chapters and things like that, since this is again my very first story. I promise you, this is the shortest chapter I will ever do in this story. As for an update schedule, I have a ton of stuff going on in my life with being in high school and all. I can't really give you a time frame for how long updates will take, but I can promise that I'm making sure to always continue working on, and improving on this story. Next chapter is where the game truly begins, so until then, please feel free to review and post your thoughts as to what you think. Until next chapter, nagaspeed!

Chapter 2: Chapter 2

Author's Note

Hello again. Thank you for all the helpful criticisms and thoughts about the prelude chapter. Hopefully I will take what you guys told me and put it to good use here. This is arguably the most difficult part of the story that I will have to write. First impressions are always the hardest ones to erase if they don't come off well. There is no perfect way to ever start a story, but hopefully this one isn't so bad that I'll have to do a rewrite. Once I get this chapter out of the way, hopefully things will start to pick up. So in other words, just bare with me here.

Oh and another thing as well. Unlike metallover, I will NOT be telling you who Robin will be parring up with. I want that to be a surprise for the readers when they read it. And it can be anyone: original cast, the future children, paralouge characters, etc. So be prepared for a ton of love angst scenes later on in the story.

But for now, lets start where it all began: one random guy face down in a middle of a field...

"Come on, we have to do SOMETHING."

Ugh, what? Just go away and let me sleep...

"Alright princess, what do you suppose we do?"

I said let me...wait. That voice...it's familiar.

"Well we can't just let him lay here!"

Urgh, that girl is talking way too loud.

With some reluctance, he slowly opened his eyes to the two people leaning down at his face in the warm sunlight. Both strangers had an uncanny familiarity to them, especially the man of the two. He was tall, and had messy blue hair which somehow seemed to suit him. The woman beside him, obviously the younger of the two and possibly in her early twenties, was a somewhat short blonde headed girl with wide blue eyes staring down at him.

Both stranger's eyes lit up as his opened, and immediately the blonde girl perked up with a warm simle on her face.

"Oh!" the blonde girl said as she leaned in closer to him. "Hi there!"

Also smiling, the blue haired man reached a hand down to him, beckoning him to give him his hand. As he pulled him off the calm, peaceful grass he said, "There are better places to take a nap, friend." *That voice is so eerily familiar...*

After being pulled up, the man absently looked at his hand and noticed the six eyed symbol tattooed to the back of it. He didn't focus on it though, reasoning that his weird tattoo was the least of his problems at the moment.

"Are you all right?" The blue haired man asked with genuine concern on his face.

"Yeah, I'm fine. Thank you...Chrom."

Chrom? Yes...CHROM! That must be his name!

Immediately, Chrom's eyebrows perked up.

"Ah. So then you must already know who I am then?"

Wait a minute...wait?

"Um...No, actually your name kind of just, well...came to me." The man said honestly. Panic started to run through his mind at the absurdity of what he had just said, and of what this man could and would probably do to him.

"Oh..." Chrom said while being a little puzzled. "Well then, tell me friend. What were you doing out here passed out in a field?"

"To be honest, I'm not even completely sure to the answer of that." The man said as a pain started to rise in his head.

Why is it that I can remember his name and nothing else?

"Well, lets start with something basic then. Tell me your name friend."

"Well I kinda uh...don't know that either." the man said as he mentally facepalmed himself.

"Hey I've heard of this!" "It's called amnesia!" the blonde girl said still bubbly and cheery.

"it's called a load of Pegasus dung." said the third member of their group as he rode in behind Chrom and the blonde girl on horseback.

Woah, why didn't I notice this guy riding in until just now?"

The tall man dislodged from his grand mount which was covered in plated silver armor with blue colored designs and patterns all over the horse's armor and saddle. The man's attire matched that of his horse: decked out in sky blue colored armor with arm and leg plating down from his feet up to his neck. Only his head and face was left free of armor.

Standing out among the three of them, he scoffed at the man in question.

"You expect us to believe that you know the name of milord and not your own? Tis' an untruthful and shameful display sir!"

"But it's true though!" the man said, slightly annoyed.

Before the big man could retort, Chrom interjected.

"But what if it IS true Frederick? We can't just leave him here out here in the middle of nowhere alone and confused. What kind of Shepherds would we be then?"

Taking in a heavy breath, the man apparently known as Frederick nodded to Chrom, and the blonde girl nodded as well in agreement.

"Very well milord; although I would advise a measure of caution. A wise Shepard would not let a wolf into his flock."

Only said one sentence to the guy, and I've already been branded as a wolf... the man sighed internally.

"Alright it's settled then!" Chrom said, breaking the obvious tension between the unknown man and Frederick.

"We'll take him to the closest town. Hopefully someone there will be able to lead us in the right direction."

The blonde woman jumped up and down excitedly, agreeing with Chrom. Frederick made an almost forceful nod and re saddled his horse, taking up his lance as he did so.

"Wait," The man said, holding up his hands. "Don't I get a say in this?"

"Nope". The blonde woman said with an innocent smile on her face.

"Haha, don't worry." Chrom said, clapping the man on his shoulder. "Once we get to town, we'll hear you out."

"Heh, I suppose it beats aimlessly trying to explain myself to three almost complete strangers in a middle of a field." The man said, smiling back at Chrom as they began walking.

The man walked steadily at the back of the group with Frederick riding in closely beside him and the blonde girl skipping along happily with Chrom leading in front. The group stopped for a minute on the path leading into town.

"Alright, the town isn't much further." Chrom said. "Let's stop for a second to rest up and then continue on."

Chrom looked behind him to see how his new found companion was doing.

"How are you holding up back there?"

"I'm alright. Don't mind me." the man said while keeping an eye on Frederick who was treating his lance like an itch he needed to scratch.

Keeping one eye on Frederick, the man asked, "am I supposed to be your prisoner now?"

Chrom laughed heartily, "haha, no of course not. Once we get you to town and establish that you're no enemy of Ylisse, you're free to go."

"Ylisse? Is that where we are?"

Frederick scoffed from atop his mount.

"Someone pay this actor; he plays quite the fool! It's very convincing, even the furrowed brow..."

Chrom rolled his eyes, annoyed in Frederick's lack of acceptance.

"Please Frederick. If we all mistrusted everyone we came across, we wouldn't even be true Shepherds. We wouldn't have any new sheep to lead into the flock."

I swear if I hear one more Shepherds metaphor... the man thought to himself.

Chrom then turned to the man to explain to him about Ylisse.

"We are currently in the Haildom of Ylisse" Chrom began.

"Our leader is known as our exalt; her name is Emmeryn. I suppose proper introductions are in order. I'm Chrom, but then again you already knew that."

Chrom gestured to the blonde girl at his side.

"The delicate one here is my sister Lissa."

Lissa made an over exaggerating frown on her face at Chrom's statement.

"I am NOT delicate!" Lissa pouted making a distinct "Hmph!" at her brother.

Rolling her eyes, she turned to face the other man.

"You must excuse my brother, he's thicker than frozen butter. You should be grateful that the Shepherds found you though. If a group of bandits had found you instead..."

"Then mister 'frozen butter head' would have came to your rescue." Chrom said cutting his sister off.

"You wish!" Lissa retorted while sticking her tongue out at Chrom.

This has to be the most whack-ball trio I have ever met in my life.

But instead, the man said "So you guys call yourself 'Shepherds' right? You tend...sheep? In full armor?"

Not counting Frederick's fully armored body, Chrom was wearing some sort of leather plates under his clothing. One of his arms was bare; the other with a gleaming white shoulder pad. His brother Lissa wore a simple yellow dress and carried an ornate staff with a large blue gem on top of it.

Hmm...a healing staff. The man thought to himself while being baffled as to how he knew that.

Breaking the man from his train of thought, Chrom chuckled at the man's question.

"Heh, it's a pretty dangerous job. Just ask Frederick the Wary over here."

Frederick huffed, and started what was no doubt some deadpanned retort. However the man was zoned out; he looked at his hand with the weird purple tattoo on in, and noticed that it had started to glow. Suddenly like a strike from a bolt of lightning, a memory hit the man.

The man broke off the playful banter between Chrom and Frederick by speaking up saying, "Robin. My name...it's Robin."

All three of the Shepherds all looked at the man known as Robin with curious looks on their faces.

"I...I just remembered that. That's weird..." Robin looked down at his hand and noticed that the tattoo had stopped glowing.

"Oh, I'm sure you did." Frederick replied sarcastically. "And I'm sure that you'll also just happen to remember that-"

"Frederick, that's enough." Chrom said, cutting off his trusted knight.

"Look, let's just continue to town." Chrom continued. "We're almost there anyway."

So my name's Robin huh? Robin thought to himself as the group started to walk towards town again. *Strange. Maybe*

the rest of memories will come back to me as well as time goes on. It's cool, I'm patient.

They walked up the last small hill before reaching the town. Lissa was skipping ahead of the rest of the group; but all of a sudden froze in shock at the crest of the hill.

"Chrom look! The town!" she gasped in horror.

Robin ran up with the others to the top of the hill to see what had shocked Lissa so much. He looked to see that most of the large buildings of the town had been set on fire by a group of bandits who he saw running around the town square harassing the towns folk. A few of the bandits had lit torches in their hands, and were throwing them at various town markets and houses of innocent villagers. A big man with a brown sash over his buff body was waving around a axe and shouting orders to the other bandits.

He must be the leader of them...

"Damn it all!" Chrom roared.

"I bet it was those bandits that we've been chasing around the countryside looking for all this week. Lissa, Frederick, let's go! Robin, just stay here until it's safe."

At that, the trio raced down the hill to the town below with weapons and staffs in hand, leaving Robin alone on the top of the hill.

"Hmm." Robin said out loud as he unconsciously moved his hand into one of his coat's various pouches. He pulled out an old spell book; it was old and worn out mostly and had a dark leather cover to it. Robin quickly flipped through it, not really understanding most of the figures and symbols inside. He did recognize the symbol on the front cover of the book though.

"Lightning magic? Hmm, so I suppose that I was some kind of mage before I lost my memories."

Robin quickly studied the easiest spells located in the beginning of the book.

"Hmm, so if I do this..."

At that a small spark was created from Robin's hands, and in a flash, the spark hit a nearby tree, roasting it's bark.

"I think it's time for me to try something a little bit...shocking." Robin mused to himself with a grin as he raced down the hill to catch up with Chrom and the others.

Chrom, Frederick and Lissa was already engaged in combat as Robin arrived. Chrom was locked in a fight with a sword welding bandit with light body armor. Frederick on the other hand, was a one man army; cutting down any fool close enough to get into range of his now bloody silver lance. Lissa was at a safe distance to the main fighting, using her staff to heal any scrapes or bruises that Chrom or Frederick were to get while in combat.

Within just short minutes, Chrom and Frederick had cleared out the brunt of the bandit force; leaving only the leader of the bandits and his guards making a defensive position over the tall burning town hall.

Robin ran over to Chrom and Frederick, yelling for their attention.

"Hey guys! Wait up! I'm coming!"

"What in the...?" Chrom turned around to see Robin running up to where he was standing.

"What in the hell are you doing here Robin?! It's still dangerous!"

"I know, but I know how to fight. I can help you guys out."

"Ah, I see you carry a sword..." Chrom said looking at the short bronze sword sticking out from the sheath in Robin's back coat pocket.

"Yes, but I also apparently know magic as well." Robin said, holding out his spell book for Chrom to see.

"Magic? Oh boy...Are you sure you know how to use it properly?" Chrom asked.

"Um...I believe so?"

"You believe so?! How about you just keep back for now."

"Wait, just hear me out, I got an idea."

"*sigh*...Alright, let's hear it." Chrom said.

"There's seven of them left in all." Robin said, pointing to the bandit's position.

"They are packed in a tight formation to protect the leader. If we charge straight through their middle, they will be able to flank us at our sides. So instead, you and Frederick need to attack the bandits on the farthest left and right, so the leader will be caught in the middle."

"So what?" Frederick asked. "He would still be protected from all directions."

"Are you sure about that?" Robin asked, pointing above where the bandit chief was standing.

"You can't be serious..." Chrom said, taking in exactly what Robin was getting at.

A tall image of what Robin assumed to be the Ylissian symbol was posted on the top of the town hall directly over the bandit leader with flames surrounding it.

"That symbol is loose from it's foundation due to the fire." Robin said.

"I believe that I can hit it with a lightning attack if I concentrate, and it will fall right on that dumb bandit's head. All you guys have to do is keep his guards occupied."

"Wow." Chrom said. "You seem to know a lot about tactics and strategies."

"Yeah, it appears that I do." Robin said with a chuckle.

"Hey, what do I get to do?" Lissa asked.

"Um...stand there are look pretty?" Robin said with a shrug.

"Hmph!" Lissa snorted as she made an over exaggerative show of disapproval.

"For your sake, I hope you know what you're doing." Frederick said to Robin with a deathly serious look on his face.

"Haha, don't worry, I got this!" Robin replied confidently.

"...I hope." Robin whispered to himself as Chrom and Frederick moved into their attack positions.

The bandit guards did exactly what Robin had predicted as Chrom and Frederick started their attack. Both flanks were occupied, so Robin wouldn't have to worry about anyone coming up to attack him as he focused he mana for his attack. Robin recited the basic lightning spell he learned, and felt a magical power start to build up inside him as yellow sparks started to form in his hands. He aimed his attack at the image mounted atop the town hall, and acted out the last hand motion required to release the spell. As Robin felt the magic surge to the point of release, he shouted out to the bandit leader, who was completely oblivious to what he was about to do.

"Hey! Ugly!" Robin yelled to the bandit. The bandit looked away from Chrom's attack and turned to Robin with a look of horror as Robin released his spell.

"Checkmate!" Robin roared. And with that, a sizable ball of pure lightning magic shot from Robin hands straight to the symbol. The attack hit it's mark, and it in a large flash of lightning and fire, the stone image fell from off the top of the town hall, and directly onto the head of the bandit leader, killing him instantly.

The remaining bandits turned around to their fallen leader in shock, and Chrom and Frederick took the opportunity to run the bandits through while their defenses were lowered.

"By the Gods! It worked!" Chrom yelled with a smile on his face as he looked to the fallen bandits.

"Excellent work Robin!" Chrom yelled to Robin while walking up to him with Frederick at his side.

"I will admit, that was a most...unexpected display." Frederick huffed as he and Chrom walked up to congratulate Robin.

"Holy wow Robin, that was incredible!" Lissa joined in.

"Swords, sorcery, and tactics! You can do it all!"

"Haha, thanks guys. I do my best." Robin said, rubbing a hand through his now messy hair.

"Alright," Chrom said, returning to the issue at hand. "Let's give these folks a hand with cleaning up the town.

"Milord, did you notice that the bandits spoke in a Plegian accent?" Frederick asked Chrom as the group finished up putting out the last of the fires with water from the local well.

"Plegian? What's that?" Robin asked curiously.

"Plegia is the westerly neighbor to Ylisse and a rival nation." Chrom explained to Robin.

"They like to quote on quote 'unofficially' send raiding parties into our territory to try to provoke us into an all out war. There's a lot of history between Ylisse and Plegia...mostly bad."

Lissa looked around the town to see all the devastation that the bandits an made and all the scared villagers returning to their shattered homes.

"And it's always the poor villagers who end up suffering for it. Totally helpless, totally innocent..." Lissa said solemnly.

"Well, in all due respect milady, that is what we are here for." Frederick said to Lissa with a reassuring simile on his face.

"Shepherds to protect the sheep. Don't fret over it milady."

"I know, I know. Thank you Frederick." Lissa said, starting to perk up again.

I suppose it's nice to see that Frederick isn't a jerk to everyone. Robin thought to himself.

The four of them were interrupted by a villager who ran up to them almost out of breath.

"Milords! *pant* Milords! You must stay the night! We are but a simple village, but we would love to reward your heroic efforts by having a feast set out for you fit for the Exalt herself!"

Frederick shook his head. "We appreciate the kind offer good sir, but I afraid we must be heading off to our designation with all due hast. The capital of Ylisse awaits!"

Lissa, however was off in her own little world making her own plans.

"Dark meat for me. Make sure it's medium-well done, no salt in the soup...Wait Frederick, what?"

Both Robin and Chrom couldn't help but snicker at the crestfallen look that Lissa had on her face.

"B-But it will be dark soon!" Lissa stammered.

"And when it gets dark, we'll camp off the land as the Shepherds always do." Frederick said matter-of-factly.

Lissa glared at the knight. "Frederick, you know what? Sometimes I hate you."

Robin and Chrom's laughter rang through the whole village as the four of them left.

Oh what an exciting adventure I've gotten myself into... Robin thought to himself with a grin on his face.

Author's Note

Well, that's it! The first chapter is out of the way! I hope I didn't screw things up too much. I'm still a novice at this. Tell me what you guys think about the personality of Robin. I tried to make him similar to metallover's take on Robin, but with my own spin on him. Don't worry, you'll get to see more of Robin's character and his depth as the story progresses and he comes in contact with more characters. I'm actually shocked with myself with how fast I got this chapter done. You guys have given me the drive to continue this story faster than expected. (just don't expect the updates to always be this fast.) So send me reviews good or bad (preferably good) and keep being awesome! Nagaspeed!

Chapter 3: Chapter 3

Author's Note

Alright, so here we are. Chapter 3. This is where the story starts to take shape. My take on the story is going to be focused far more heavily on characters and their interactions with each other more so than the combat and battles, so you'll notice very quickly that I'm not the best at writing battle sequences. But I'll give it my best shot. Once more characters get introduced into the story, I'll have more options as to what directions I can take the story. But for now, let's just jumps right in shall we?

The quartet traveled through the forests of Ylisse for the remainder of the day; taking no breaks until nightfall. Robin made sure to notice all the bits and details from the conversations Chrom, Lissa, and Frederick had with each other to learn as much as he could.

"Milord," Frederick started as the group wandered deeper into the forest looking for a place to make camp.

"Don't you think it wise to learn more about sir Robin before making him a Shepherd like one of us?"

Wow, the guy doesn't even bother to whisper about it.

"Well," Chrom said with a slight smile on his face while looking back at Robin.

"What do you think we should do?"

"Wait what?" Robin asked, surprised at amount of trust Chrom has already given him.

"You want ME to decide if I should join you guys and become a Shepherd?"

"Well, sure why not?" Chrom laughed. "It would be your decision anyway. Even if all of us trusted you with our lives, the choice to join us would still be yours."

"Milord!" Frederick interjected, completely flustered by the overwhelming amount of trust Chrom was giving Robin despite his own objections.

"You know what Frederick?" Chrom fired back. "Just shut it. I know you mean well, and if you're right, and if Robin is some sort of spy or whatever you think he is, then I'll have no one to blame but myself for trusting him. But I have faith that Robin won't bring harm to us. Don't ask in Naga's name why. But I do. Besides, I AM the leader of this group, so the final decision is mine anyway."

Completely in shock by Chrom's blatant slap to the face to his advice, Frederick turned to Lissa; looking for anyone to back him up at this point.

"Nu uh! Don't look at me Freddy Bear. I'm with my brother on this one." Lissa said with a mischievous smile.

"Freddy Bear? FREDDY BEAR?!" Robin laughed out loud at Lissa's hilarious nickname that she gave (or perhaps given a long time ago) to the serious knight in armor.

"Oh, you are SO never gonna hear the end of that one!" Robin mocked at Frederick who was now a shameful wreck.

"Sir Robin, you DO realize that a have a firm hand still placed on my lance, do you not?" Frederick replied threateningly.

"Hey now, no need for threats." Chrom said, trying to break off the escalating conversation between Frederick and Robin.

"Hey, I would be careful if I were you Chrom," Robin said, still trying to contain his laughter.

"I think Frederick here is already BEARy angry!"

At that, everyone burst out laughing, except Frederick of course, who was at this point considering just running Robin through with his lance and being done with it.

When Robin calmed down a little, he continued his furry assault.

"Hey Frederick, I hate to be the BEAR of bad news, but it seems that your argument is a lost PAWS!"

Not willing to take the harassment any longer, Frederick promptly dismounted his horse, walked up face to face with Robin, and hit him smack in the face with an armored fist.

"What the hell?! ARGH!" Robin yelled as fell straight down onto the grass below.

"FREDERICK!" Chrom yelled, drawing his sword and pointing it in Frederick's path, warning him not to continue.

"Milord,"Frederick began, slowly regaining his composure.

"These endless insults prove nothing more than Robin's intentions of degrading and sabotaging us." Frederick sneered, looking down at a writhing Robin.

Gods, that seriously hurt. Note to self: no more Frederick jokes.

"Frederick, this is never going to work if there is bad blood raging between us. Even if Robin isn't a Shepherd, he's still a good person who has done nothing more than help us up to this point."

Taking a breath, Chrom looked Frederick straight in the eye and holstered his weapon.

"Now, I want you to give Robin a hand and apologize to him."

"Milord, you can't be seri-"

"NOW!" Chrom snapped, making Lissa yelp.

Reluctantly, Frederick reached down a hand to Robin, pulling him up to his feet.

"Heh, this is now the second time in one day that someone has pulled me off a field of grass." Robin said, trying to make light of the whole situation.

"Robin...I must apologize." Frederick began, his words sounding very forced as he did so.

"I acted rashly and out of line from a person of my station. In truth, it is my wish for you to befriend us and perhaps become one of us. Part of me wants to believe what you say, but my position mandates otherwise."

"It's alright Freddy B- err, Frederick." Robin said, composing himself.

"I understand your skepticism." Robin continued. "Just know that I have absolutely no wish of bringing harm to any one of you."

"Hopefully I will begin to believe that statement soon enough." Frederick replied, doing his best to muster up a smile.

It seemed so easy for him to smile around Lissa... Oh well.

"Good," Chrom said, taking a sigh of relief.

"Now that that's out of the way, I believe I see a spot up ahead where we can set up camp."

"Wow..." Robin said, taking in his surroundings. "This actually is a pretty good campsite." "The trees and underbrush aren't too thick, so we can still see a a good deal ahead of us. And we're still surrounded by trees from all sides. That would be good for protection against wandering wildlife..."

"Like bears..." Frederick cut in, taking a seat on a log that he had cut down earlier.

"Hey, you're putting words in my mouth! I wasn't going to say bears...yet." Robin said with a smile, causing Chrom to make a weak chuckle.

Fortunately, Frederick was also somewhat amused, letting out a slight grin.

"Gods, darn it!" Lissa complained, throwing her hands up in the air in frustration.

"Why do I have to be the one who starts the fire?"

"It's a good learning experience sis." Chrom said with a smile while patting Lissa's shoulder.

"It's better you learn now with comrades, then in a more dire situation." Frederick added in.

"I know I know." Lissa sighed. "But still, who's stupid wise crack idea was it to rub two sticks together to start a fire?"

"Um...no idea." Robin said, quickly lowering his head to the grass below him.

"And also these logs!" Lissa continued on.

"Frederick, why couldn't you find COMFORTABLE logs to sit on?"

"Milady, one does not 'find' logs. He cuts them down from trees. No logs are ever going to be all that comfortable. Still, it's a good learning experience nonetheless."

"See, even sir Robin is not complaining about his seating conditions." Frederick continued, giving Robin some sort of fake excuse for a smile.

"Yeah Lissa, toughen up!" Robin joined in laughing innocently.

Gods, these logs seriously hurt though. Robin thought to himself.

"HAHA! I got it!" Lissa yelled gleefully as a spark finally caught fire from the grinding of the two sticks.

"Good job sis!" Chrom congratulated. "Robin, would you mind going to Frederick's pile of stacked wood to get us some to put on the fire to keep it going?"

"No of course not." Robin replied, getting up and beginning to walk over to Frederick's wood pile deeper in the forest.

Anything to get off that log...

Getting closer to the wood pile, Robin decided to stall some time by taking in the scenery. It was alright dark, and there wasn't a cloud in the sky. And also it was quiet. Almost TOO quiet. None of the multitude of trees were stirring at all. And there was no sound of any wildlife whatsoever.

"Where did all the animals go..."Robin thought out loud.

Back at camp, Chrom was starting to worry about what was taking Robin so long.

"Robin needs to return soon, or this fire will go out." Frederick said plainly.

"Yeah," Lissa added. "I don't want all my stick twirling to be for nothing!"

"Alright," Chrom said, giving in. "I'll go out and look for him. Frederick, stay here and guard over Lissa.

Fredrick nodded as Chrom got up and started to head out in search of Robin.

Something really isn't right here... Robin thought to himself as he continued to look at all the still trees within the pale moonlight.

All of a sudden, a sharp pain hit Robin's head like a shock wave, making him double take in agony.

"Arrg!" "What the..."

Flashes went into Robin's mind. Images of destruction and loss on a worldwide scale. The images were flashing too fast for Robin's mind to keep up with. Burning buildings with scorched earth and people everywhere. Bodies littering the streets. Agonizing screams coming from all over the land.

What could have done this? Robin thought to himself; trying to make sense of what he was seeing in his mind.

Then Robin heard a voice: a dark, authoritative, and booming voice that sent chills rocketing through his spine. "**AND NOW IT IS YOUR TURN...TO DIE!"** The threat rang out in Robin's ears, causing him to kneel to the ground in pain.

"What the hell is happening to me?!"

At that the ground beneath Robin's feet began shaking. The earth itself began to rumble, and Robin started to lose his footing. The images and pain in Robin head's immediately faded away as the cataclysm began; an unknown earth-shattering force toppling rows of trees far in the distance from where Robin was standing.

As Robin regained control of his mind again, he tried to analyse what was happening by scanning the area all around him while still trying to keep his footing. Abruptly, the ground itself began to crack apart, and a massive pool of molten

lava quickly rose up from above the cracks.

*Oh Gods..*Robin thought in horror. *I've got to get out of here.*

The lava and fire began to spew all over the landscape; incinerating everything it touched. Robin ran in the opposite direction as fast as his legs could carry him back to camp to warn the others about what he was seeing. Looking behind him, Robin saw with relief that the storm of lava had began to die down a bit and stay contained within a large batch of trees.

The relief was short lived however as Robin turned back around to see something appear in the sky out of the blue. It was some sort of giant light blue eye, with crystals sticking out from it from all sides. It had some sort of split pupil in the center of it, almost like that of a snake's eye.

Robin was immobilized with fear staring up at the foreign object, when suddenly two forms began to coalesce from within the center of the eye. After completely coming through what Robin guessed to be sort some of portal, the two figures dropped down to the ground below unharmed, and stared at Robin menacingly

The foreign creatures had the shape of a human, but Robin immediately noticed that the creatures were anything but normal humans. They both had beaming red eyes which were surrounded by a dark purple mask covering each of their faces. Their breathing was that of pure darkness, with a dark purple mist appearing from their disfigured mouths with every breath. The two were wearing identical armor; resembling something akin to a barbarian, and to better fit the look, they both also wielded a steel plated axe.

Robin gulped and then took a step back as one of the creatures began to charge up to Robin's position; axe at the ready. Robin drew his sword; deciding that he didn't want to take the risk of trying his spell book. Robin's sword wasn't very well made, and being forged from bronze, it wouldn't do much damage; especially not to these things.

Having nothing at the moment to work with however, Robin held his sword out anyway, and went in to combat the first creature. The creature attacked first; barley missing Robin's right arm as he barreled left to dodge the attack. Having better reflexes than the creature, Robin spun around and struck the creature in the back with his sword, causing the creature to fall to the ground face first. Robin then went in for the kill blow as he stood over the fallen creature and drove his sword straight through the creature's chest.

Instead of going limp like a normal dying creature would however, the monster instead dissolved quickly into a cloud of purple mist and faded away out of existence. Breathing heavy, Robin tried to take the moment to asses his situation when suddenly, the second creature out of nowhere charged Robin and hit him in his ribs with its shoulder pads. Robin got knocked back several feet to the ground, and had the wind taken out of him. Looking behind him, Robin noticed a sizable smooth rock, and he starting sliding to it from the ground to have a support to lean on. Slowly walking up to his position, the second creature waited until Robin had his back on the rock until it continued its assault.

Standing over Robin like a giant, the creature slammed its axe hard down upon Robin. Robin parried with his bronze sword, but immediately found himself being overwhelmed by the sheer force of the creature's blow against his sword. Sparks began to fly from the grinding of the two weapons, and Robin did his best to parry against the powerful blow.

Can't hold...much...longer...

As if in answer to Robin's prayer, Chrom came rushing in to the scene from his search for Robin.

"Robin! Hold on, I'm coming!" Chrom yelled from afar as he drew up Falchion. Chrom raced to reach Robin as run as he could go, however Robin knew that he probably couldn't hold long enough for Chrom to get there.

At that very moment, another figure began to coalesce from the massive eye shaped object in the sky. Unlike the other two though, this one came out running and made an almost unnatural leap through the air from the eye, while floating down from a cape down to the ground to Robin.

The person landed closer to Robin than Chrom did, and the person hit the ground running up towards Robin. Robin could obviously tell that this was an actual human, and not another one of those creatures, but he couldn't tell much else since the person was running up towards him so fast and he was still focused on holding the parry on the creature.

Just as Robin was about to give out, the creature noticed the person running up towards it, and it turned around to face it. The person drew out a sword that looked strikingly similar to Chrom's and engaged the creature in a standing weapon lock. Chrom took the opportunity to close in around the creature's flank and strike it from the behind. Noticing what Chrom was about to do, the creature turned around, but slowly enough to leave an opening to its front. The unknown man used the opening to strike the creature in half in one broad strike as Chrom did the same at the same moment

from behind.

The dismembered creature then quickly dissolved to purple mist like the one previous to it. Sweat pouring from his face, Robin stood up from the rock and holstered his sword to his back coat pocket.

Man, this is an awesome coat. Robin thought absently.

Turning to look at the mysterious man who just saved his life, Robin nodded his appreciation.

"Thank you for that. That was pretty awesome." Robin said with a weak smile.

The unknown person wore armor similar to Chrom's, only some sort of different variant. The man also had navy blue hair identical to Chrom's, but held together by some sort of prince crown. The most out of place part about the man however, was that he was wearing some sort of blue mask over his face, concealing everything but his mouth. There were slits in the mask for the person to see out of, but they weren't big enough for Robin to make out the person's eyes.

"That was some pretty fancy swordplay." Chrom said, turning to face the man.

"You saved my friend's life, so that makes you a friend too."

Chrom considers me to be his friend...

"What's your name?" Chrom inquired.

"My name is not important." the man said in a deep and hoarse voice.

"There are important matters this way." The man said pointing to the direction of the Shepherd's camp.

"Of course," Chrom said, steeling himself.

"Let's go!"

Returning to the campsite, Robin noticed that the fire that Lissa had started had been put out, and both her and Frederick weren't there.

"Where did they go to?" Chrom asked with a worried look on his face.

"This way." the unknown man beckoned, leading Robin and Chrom through some underbrush and into a wide open field. Frederick and Lissa were out there trying to fight off the oncoming monsters.

There was a small pack of them; Robin counted 19 in all, all spread out among the open field in a slow march to Frederick's and Lissa's location. Scanning the creatures more closely, Robin also made some other observations.

Not all of them are axe wielders like the ones I encountered. Some wield swords, a couple in the back seem to be archers, one is even on horseback. The mounted one must be some sort of leader...hmm.

"Chrom," Robin said, hatching a strategy. "The believe the mounted one is the leader. Maybe if we kill it, the others will retreat. There is also no other creatures guarding it, so a fast person like yourself could go in there for a quick assault."

"How would we be sure the others will scatter though?" Chrom asked.

"They won't retreat." the masked man said. "They always fight to the death."

"Wonderful..." Robin sighed. "Alright plan B. Chrom, you and this other fellow make your way up to the leader and cut down anyone in your way. I'll go over to back up Frederick and Lissa."

"Are you sure you can handle it?" Chrom asked. The majority of them seem to be heading in their direction.
"True, but I also saw that." Robin said, pointing to a small abandoned fort northwest to Frederick and Lissa's location.

"If I could clear a path to that, we could all make a defensive position inside. Then we would have a chance."

"Fair enough." Chrom said, readying his sword. "What are we waiting for then?"

"Nothing." the masked man replied to no one in particular as he moved up ahead without another word with sword in hand.

"The guy sure doesn't talk much..." Chrom said as he followed suit to catch up.

Alright, I guess it's up to me now. At least I get to try out my spell book again.

Readying his spell book, Robin rushed up to help his friends. Frederick had two axe wielding creatures on his horse which Frederick had turned broadside for Lissa to take cover behind. Frederick seemed to be handling it, but Robin knew he would be overwhelmed if the other ones reached him.

"R-Robin!" Frederick yelled when he saw Robin running up towards him.

"Thank the gods you're here. I can not fail milord, but I fear I cannot hold off all these ghastly creatures by myself."
"Can you handle the one's you're fighting now?" Robin yelled back.

Holding his lance sideways and shoving the creatures back to give him a chance to breath, Frederick replied, "Yes, I believe so Robin. But even with your help, we can't take them all."
"Look over there,"Robin said, pointing the abandoned fort out to Frederick.

"I'll clear a path to the fort. Once I do, get yourself and Lissa in there and make a defensive position."

"Understood." Frederick replied, turning his attention back to the attacking creatures.

Alright, there are three of those things in my way to the fort. If I can bunch them up, I could take them all down with one spell.

Making in on-the-fly strategy Robin kept his spell book in one hand, and wielded his sword with the other.

If I attack the middle one, the others will try to flank me, and if I dodge them, I can turn back around and hit them all with one bolt.

Robin began his run up to the monsters, making sure to use an over-the-top display of force.

I hope this works...

Robin rushed the creature in the middle of the three with his sword; readying a broad swing. Just as Robin predicted, the other two monsters ran up to try to flank Robin at his sides. The middle creature, with a sword in hand, readied itself for Robin's blow. Instead of striking however, Robin faked out the monster by kicking the monster in the shin, and then shoving the creature to the ground. The other two monsters practically ran into each other, and tripped over the fallen creature in an embarrassing display.

Robin quickly switched from his sword to his spell book; trying to ready a lightning spell before the monsters recuperated. Feeling his mana swell, Robin unknowingly used a slightly more powerful spell than last time called Elthunder. In a wave of yellow light, Robin struck down the three monsters in one ball of electricity. The monsters all turned to purple ash and dissolved away, making a clear path to the fort.

"It's all clear!" Robin yelled over to Frederick, who at this point defeated the two monsters attacking him and Lissa.

"We're on our way Robin!" Frederick yelled back. He beckoned for Lissa to get on his steed, and gave her a hand while pulling her up. Frederick then rode quickly over to Robin and made their way into the fort.

"I'll get the high ground the fire at them from above. You get to the fort's entrance and hold the line there." Robin commanded to Frederick.
"Lissa, make sure to heal up Frederick and keep him in the fight." Robin ordered, making sure Lissa had an actually role this time around.

"Can do!" Lissa smiled as took up a position under a barricade a few meters behind Frederick at the fort entrance.

"Where is milord?" Frederick asked Robin with a pale face of concern.

"He's with some weird masked guy we found earlier. Their charging up the line and attacking the leader of these...things."

Looking out from his perch, Robin spotted Chrom and the masked stranger already near the leader and fighting off a couple of monsters that choose to fall back to protect the leader.

Hmm, so these things can adapt...

"Here they come!" Frederick yelled over to Robin as the first group of creatures approached the fort's gate.

Looking out over the battle, Robin had a pale look on his face.

We can't win this...there's too many of them.

Robin, Frederick, and Lissa we're outnumbered 4 to one, which is terrible odds even with the added protection of the fort.

Steeling himself for what very well could be his last stand, Robin got his spell book at the ready.

This is it...

"Captain Chrom! Shepherds! Wait, I'm coming!"

What the...

Robin looked over his shoulder to find a short haired redhead woman on horseback entering the field along with a man running up behind her. The man had long silver blue hair and was wearing a very...unique choice of clothing design.

"Frederick, it's reinforcements! We're saved!" Robin yelled out gleefully, waving over at the redhead woman.

"I see you guys!" the redhead woman yelled over to Robin. "I'm on my way!"

"Hold!" the light blue haired man commanded to the redhead just before she started her way over to the fort.

"Why, pray tell, would such a beautiful creature such as yourself be leaving such a worthy man like myself in your sweet dust?"

"What in the hell.." The redhead got out before the swooner continued his romantic assault.

"Why, you are better suited to wage only love, not war my dear lady."

"Who in the hell do you think you are?" the redhead asked, obviously annoyed.

*Wait a minute...*Robin thought to himself, trying to make out everything the two were saying from afar.

Is that one guy FLIRTING with her?! IN THE MIDDLE OF A BATTLE?! IN A BATTLE THAT WE CAN'T WIN NO LESS?!

Feeling rage bubble inside him, Robin didn't notice that he had his spell book opened the whole time. Apparently his rage had triggered some sort of foreign spell. Robin started to lose control over his body as his hands turned pure white with lightning magic.

Holy crap...I can't control...

Rushing down to meet the creatures at the front entrance where Frederick had already begun his battle, Robin beckoned for Frederick to stand back, as the powerful unknown spell took it's final stages.

I can't...feel...anything... Robin managed to think despite the incredible pressure in his head.

Facing the 12 encroaching creatures at the fort gate, Robin could do nothing but scream as the spell took hold over him.

"ARRRRRGGGGHHH!"

In a ripple of blinding light, a focused beam of pure lighting magic hit an area wide enough to engulf every creature in a fiery light storm. Every single creature instantly dissolved away at the very touch of the spell, and the leader of the pack, who was engaged in combat in Chrom, turned and galloped away on its ghostly stead into the deep forest.

Meanwhile, as all this was going on, the silver head man was still trying to swoon the red head woman, who at this point couldn't decide if the man was even a friend or foe to the group.

"Ah, but you must know my name." The man said in a theatrical and over the top manner.

"I am the legend that swoons for true love. The Prince Charming to every damsel in distress who ever heard even the slightest whispers of me. I am the man who put the 'arch' in archer. In fact, I am the ARCHEST of archers! My name, my dear sweet is Vi-"

"Sorry ruffles," the fed up red head replied, cutting the man off. "I have no time for this..." "WHAT THE HELL!? Where did

all those creatures go?!" the red head said in a shocked manner.

"It was Robin." Frederick said, walking up to the woman with a very faint Robin in tow. "He single-handedly took down the brunt of the force."

"Yeah, it was so spectacular!" Lissa joined in. "Just one big flash of light, and boom! All of them whisked away!"

"The leader of them fled." Chrom said as he walked up to the baffled red head with the masked man beside him.

"The Risen never flee..." the masked man said thoughtfully.

"The act must have been very spectacular indeed to cause one to retreat."

"How is Robin?" Chrom asked in a very concerned tone while looking at the very pale Robin resting on Frederick's steed.

"He's alive," Frederick said seriously. "But that's all I can really tell you at this point."

"Lissa," Chrom said, turning to his sister. "Tend to Robin, and make sure he comes back to okay."

"Can do big brother." Lissa said, while growing serious as well as she saw Robin's condition.

"Alright, let's all get back to camp and get things sorted out." Chrom said.

"Oh, and welcome aboard Sully." Chrom said to the red head.

"Glad to tag along captain." the red head said with a grin on her face.

"My name is Virion by the way..." the silver blue haired man said to no one in particular.

"Your world is on the brink of a horrible disaster." the masked man said around the campfire to the Shepherds.

"What you saw tonight with those "creatures" is only but a prelude to the things to come. You have been warned."

With that the man swiftly rose up and departed the Shepherds like a whisk in the night without another word.

"Wait hold up!" Lissa called to the man. "What's the warning? What should we be worried about?". However the man didn't answer back and was already gone.

"I don't know about the rest of you," the red head woman known as Sully said. "But I don't buy that superstitious 'end of the world' bull crap for one second."

"I've got a feeling that's not the last time we'll see that man." Chrom said staring out into the forest.

Turning to his sister who had now returned to treating Robin, Chrom asked,

"How is Robin holding up?"

"He should be awake by the time we arrive in the capital tomorrow." Lissa said with a hopefully smile.

"Please be ok friend..." Chrom said to Robin as the group blew out the fire to go to sleep for the night.

Author's Note

So, what did you think? Not quite what you were expecting eh? Well hang on to your arses, because it's just getting started! Make sure to leave a review of what you think of the story so far and what direction I should take it. I'm always open to new ideas. Nagaspeed all!

Chapter 4: Chapter 4

Author's Note

Who Hoo! Only 4 chapters in, and already this story has gotten exactly 600 views (what are the odds?) and 11 reviews. Thank you so much to all the readers who have read and reviewed this story. You all have given me some great tips and insight into this, and hopefully things will smoothen out the further we get into the story. If you haven't noticed already, I like to have a bunch of side events and dialogue along with the main story elements, and I can't really do much of it now since the story is just taking off. Hopefully however, once we get into the Plegian war, some cool and interesting sub plots and ideas made by both myself, and also you readers will be able to take flight.

On another note, this is the first chapter that uses the support conversations from the game. They won't be word for word, and most of them won't even take place in the same premise as most of the in game ones, but rest assured a lot of them will be in this story. And rightfully so, since it's one of the major highlights of the game.

Also, a few of you have had some concerns over who Robin is going to eventually get paired up with. I'm not giving away that information (unless you REALLY bother me about it), but I will say that it will not, I repeat NOT be the quote on quote "mainstream" pairings such as Lucina, Cordelia, Tharja, Tiki, etc. So if you were only reading for Robin to be paired with one of the above characters, sorry but you're out of luck. I want to go do something unexpected and fresh to make this story to stand out from a lot of the other ones. But one thing at a time of course. Let's continue on with Chapter 4.

What...where...where am I?

Where you are willed to be.

What? Who are you? I can't see anything...it's all black.

HAHAHA, that is a color you will soon grow to fall in love with.

Am I dead? Or having some sort of vision? And who the hell are you?!

HAHAHA...young fool. 'who am I?'. You would do better to ask yourself that question.

Look, I don't know who or what you are, but if you don't get out of my head right now I'l-

You'll What? Destroy me? There is so much you have let to learn.

If that's so, then just show me then.

All things in time. And that's all it will be Robin, a matter of time...

What? How do you know my name? Answer me damn you! Ahhh...

Slowly and reluctantly, Robin opened up his eyes to glimmering light in the sky above him. It was daybreak; the sky slowly giving away the darkness of night, and succumbing to the glowing brightness of the sun in a war for light within the clouds.

What the hell WAS that? Robin thought to himself.

Was that some sort of dream, or nightmare, or...something?

Robin immediately noticed that not only was he faced up towards the sky, but he was also moving.

Where am I now?

Robin tried to get up, but then noticed that his hands and legs had been hog tied down to the end of a horse.

Frederick's horse... Robin thought, judging by the armor.

We must be on our way to Ylisse's capitol. Well, better tell the guys I'm awake.

"Hey, guys! I'm awake!" Robin shouted over the trodding of Frederick's horse to the rest of the Shepherds.

"Frederick, stop your horse." Robin heard Chrom call out to Frederick and then felt the abrupt jolt as the horse stopped on Frederick's command.

"Ah, so he is finally up." Frederick said in a relaxed voice while looking back at Robin.

"Here, I'll get you down from there." Chrom said, walking up alongside Frederick's steed and pulling Robin down from off of it.

"Is there any particular reason I was tied up?" Robin asked as Chrom unfastened the straps around Robin's hands and feet.

"Yes believe it or not." Chrom said seriously. "Do you not remember the outburst of magic you had last night which knocked you out cold?"

Doing his best to think back, Robin scratched the back of his head, thinking out loud.

"Hmm..wait yes! Yes I do! Back at the fort!" Robin exclaimed as the memory returned to him.

Well, at least my short term memory still works fine. Robin thought while speaking.

"I felt some sort of weird and foreign energy consume me," Robin continued on.

"As if I wasn't even the one who caused the attack."

"Let me take a look at that spell book of yours." Lissa cut in while walking up daintily to the group.

Robin handed her the book, and at once the girl skimmed through it's pages while studying the various spells inside.

"This is only a beginner's lightning spell book." Lissa said, looking up from the book with a look of serious concern on her face.

"The most powerful attack you can release from this spell book is Elthunder. And the attack you made last night looked to be some really amped up version of Thoron."

"Thoron? What's that." Robin asked thoughtfully while looking at the blonde girl.

"It's an ancient and very powerful lightning attack. Only the best mages know how to properly use it. But what you unleashed made Thoron seem like nothing."

"Wow, I thought you were only a healer. I didn't know you knew so much about the magical arts." Robin replied to Lissa.

"Well healing is what I'm best at." Lissa replied honestly. "But I did learn a lot about magic in my studies to become a professional healer. The two talents usually go hand in hand. But for now, I've only mastered one."

"It's ok sis, I bet you'll get it down some day." Chrom joined in while putting a hand on his sister's shoulder.

"But if what I used was that powerful," Robin said, returning to the subject at hand.

"then in my life before meet you guys, I must have been some sort of powerful mage."

"We thought as much as we dragged you along last night." Chrom replied.

"But clearly, you did not seem to be in control when you unleashed the attack." he continued.

"What exactly triggered the attack anyway?" Chrom asked.

"Hmm, I remember rage being a part of it." Robin replied, thinking back to the previous night.

"But what was the rage towards?" Robin asked himself out loud.

"It was towards...towards...him!" Robin thought in a flash while pointing a finger at the silver blue haired man known as Virion. The man was off in the background while leaning on the horse that belonged to Sully while keenly listening to the conversation. But now all eyes were on him.

"Ah, my dear fellow," Virion replied to the outlash in a very calm and melodic tone.
"Most matters of dire import do seems to always go back to me in one way or another."

"What were you doing back there last night?" Robin asked in a slightly angry tone as Virion walked up to properly address Robin.

"Only proclaiming my presence to the heroes in distress so that I may come to a quick and majestic rescue. A most noble endeavor, wouldn't you agree?"

"It seemed more so like you were just flirting with her." Robin said with a frown while pointing to Sully, who was still sitting atop her horse looking down at the conversation below.

"Ah, but that is only but part of proclaiming my noble presence dear boy." Virion said, still keeping a very calm and collected way about him.

"It is only natural for a person of my ilk to express his feelings of noble love to the fair maidens of the land. Tis' would be a disgrace to do any less."

"Flirting to people is one thing, but doing it in the middle of a BATTLE?" Robin said, growing impatient with the man.

"Ah, yes, but the battle was won was it not? And even without my noble assistance. That goes to prove your skill on the field of battle good sir, and for that you have my genuine respect."

"Alright, whatever. I don't care. Water under the bridge. It's all making my head hurt anyway." Robin said with a sigh.

"Despite his overly 'noble' bearings, Virion is a very skilled and capable soldier." Chrom said with a smile. "I'm sure you two will get along just fine with time."

Growing serious again, Robin asked for his spell book back from Lissa, and looked through it again.

"What if I can't control things like this from happening?" Robin asked the group while still staring down at the book.

"What if an outburst like last night happens again? And worse yet, what if I can't control whether or not it's pointed at an enemy?"

"Maybe you should take a break from magic for a while." Chrom said, looking Robin straight in the eye.

"It's obvious to everyone that you have great skill with the art, but maybe like Lissa you just haven't mastered it yet. Things like that take a long time to get properly under control. And who knows who longs it been since you used magic in whatever life you lived before meeting us."

"Maybe you're right Chrom..." Robin said solemnly.

"You showed us that you carry a sword as well. How about using that for the time being until you think you're ready to try out magic again."

"Ok fair enough." Robin said while putting his spell book back in his coat pocket.

"It's ok Robin," Lissa chimed in, trying to cheer the man up.

"Maybe now we can both practice and learn together."

"Haha, yeah, I guess we can." Robin said with a smile.

"Hey, is that Ylisstol?" Lissa said turning around to face the open road ahead.

Robin squinted to see where the girl was pointing.

"Yep, that's it." Chrom said, barely making out the tallest buildings off in the distance.

"It may seem small now, but it's about to get a whole lot bigger."

"Well, what the hell are we waiting for then?" Sully joined in out of nowhere while pointing her horse back towards the open road.

"You think you'll be able to walk the rest of the way?" Chrom asked Robin.

"Yeah, I think I'll manage." Robin said, while beginning the final march to Ylisstol.

Taking up the rear in the group, Robin decided to take the opportunity to get to know some of the Shepherds better.

Hmm, let's see.. Robin thought while looking around the group.

Virion is busy flirting with Sully again, figures. Chrom is telling Lissa something, but I can't seem to make out what. Either way, they're both occupied. I guess that only leaves Frederick then...also figures.

"Hey Frederick," Robin began while picking up some pace to keep up with Frederick's horse.

"Yes Robin?" Frederick said causally.

"Hey, I know we got off to kind of a rough start, but I want you to know I would like to become your friend as well." Robin said, making sure to choose his words carefully.

"It is quite alright Robin." Frederick said, looking down to make eye contact with him.

"If anything, it is me who should be apologizing. Especially for the, erm...flesh wound."

"It's alright, it only bruised a little." Robin said shrugging.

"And I'm the one who started it anyway."

"A true statement." Frederick said, breaking his first real smile towards Robin; the only thing Robin ever wanted from the man since he first met him.

"Well, having an apologizing war isn't the real reason I wanted to talk to you." Robin said, while internally sighing a breath of relief that he was able to break the ice.

"You and Chrom seem to be pretty close right?"

"Yes," Frederick said in a proud manner.

"He is milord and my protectorate. But more than that he is my friend who I would give my life for."

"Well, that's just the thing a wanted to ask..." Robin said, growing serious.

"From what I've seen of you and Chrom so far, you two seem to be at odds with each other. And since I assumed that you guys were pretty close, it all seemed kinda out of place, so I was wondering why."

Frederick sighed, taking in a deep breath before staring at Robin.

"Well, that would be because of you Robin." Frederick said, trying to be as emotionless as possible.

"Because of me?" Robin asked perplexed.

"Yes, and it was the chief cause of my dislikement for you. You see Robin, as you said, milord and I are very close, and we rarely disagree on anything. So it put me through a loop when we disagreed over you. I failed to see why Chrom was so trusting of you, and still fail to see it now. But more than that, he wouldn't listen to reason. And that is something that milord is definitely not known for."

"I see..." Robin said, taking in what Frederick was saying. "I'm sorry if I caused a breach between you two."

"But as I was saying," Frederick continued on, ignoring Robin's apology.

"It is like milord trusts you more than myself. And I've known milord for years while you for less than even one day. I've never seen milord become so stubborn and hard headed, and I blamed you for being the cause of milord's lack in judgment and character."

"But you don't blame me now?" Robin asked.

"No, I still do." Frederick continued while still staring Robin in the face and riding along on his horse.

"But I talked about this very issue to milord last night while you were unconsciousness. He said he felt some sort of foreign bond with you that he had never felt with any other man before. As if he KNEW that you would be trust worthy and become his friend. And he got very irritated with me when I felt otherwise. I don't feel whatever invisible bond that milord feels with you. But after our discussion last night, I have decided to give you the benefit of the doubt until you give me a reason to do otherwise."

"Thank you Frederick." Robin said while smiling up at the knight in armor.

Frederick broke his stare with Robin, and looked out to the approaching city.

"And Robin..." Frederick said, while still staring out into the distance.

"If you do decide to join us...you will make a fine Shepherd."

Robin smiled at Frederick's statement and sinked back to the rear of the group again.

You know, Frederick's a pretty alright guy. Robin thought while smiling.

"Hey Frederick!" Chrom called back to the knight, noticed that he was finished talking with Robin.

"Do you think we'll see that strange masked man again in Ylisstol?"

"Ah, I saw him earlier milord." Frederick called back. "Did I not tell you?"

"No, you didn't." Chrom said. "I think you were too caught up in our discussion from earlier.

"Ah, my apologies milord," Frederick said. "Yes, I saw the masked man as I was scouting out the road ahead before daybreak. He was off to the side of the road looking at the grass, flowers, and various other fauna. It is as if he had never seen fertile plant life before..."

"Hmm." Chrom said. "Did you talk to him?"

"Indeed so." Frederick said. "And I was able to get his name as well. He told me his name was Marth."

"Marth?" Chrom repeated in wonder. "You mean like the ancient hero-king?"

"Just so milord. He told me his name and nary another word as he went deeper into the forest again."

"So we probably won't be seeing this 'Marth' at Ylisstol then." Chrom said, facing the road again and continuing their march.

Finally, the group made it to the capitol of Ylisse, and Chrom took no time in showing Robin around.

"I'm heading up to the barracks." Sully said with an almost bored look on her face. "Don't follow me Ruffles." she said, glaring back at Virion who was doing everything in his power to get close to the woman."

Sully walked off, and Virion "noblily" walked a safe distance away from Sully while still following her to the barracks.

"Wow, so this is the capitol of Ylisse..." Robin said, mouth agape. "What a beautiful city."

The city was gleaming with tall bright buildings reaching up to the blue sky above it; most of them surrounded by smaller houses and buildings such as houses and markets, and the streets were abuzz with townsfolk. There was a certain peacefulness to the city; a certain charm to it.

"Yes, that it is." Chrom said warmly. Taking a look around the group though, Chrom asked, "Wait, where did Lissa run off to?"

"Ta-daa!" Lissa exclaimed, holding up a big bag of shiny red apples. "I bought these babies at a town market. They're so fresh and ripe. Anyone care to try one?"

"Sure I'll take one." Robin said, holding out a hand for Lissa to give him an apple.
"I'll take one too, thank you sis." Chrom agreed as well.

Holding up the fresh apple, Robin closed his eyes and took a bite of it, taking in the flavorful sensations. It then hit Robin that this was the first food he had ever tasted; or at least the first food he ever remembered tasting.

"Wow, this is so good!" Robin said, beaming with delight while taking another bite.

"Ylisstol's market places are along the finest in the realm." Chrom said while taking a bite of his apple.

"I'm glad you like it Robin!" Lissa said with a wide smile across her face.

Taking in the sights again, Robin suddenly noticed a group of what he assumed to be Ylissian militia walking through the city's streets, while escorting what seemed to be some sort of woman. Robin couldn't make out her appearance from

where he was standing.

"What's going on over there?" Robin asked while pointing over to the militia.

"Ah, there goes Ylisse's royal guard." Frederick said, while walking up to the trio from the local blacksmith shop.

"Hey look, it's Emmeryn!" Lissa exclaimed, pointing to the woman the royal guards were escorting.

"Yeah, so it is." Chrom said with a smile while finishing off his apple.

"Emmeryn?" Robin asked. "Who's that?'

"Emmeryn is our nation's leader and exalt," Chrom said jubilantly. "She's the single handed reason Ylisse has held it's peace with Plegia for as long as it has. She's the embodiment of peace."

"Yeah, and she's also the best big sister anyone could ever hope for!" Lissa said in a bubbly fashion like her normal self.

"Haha, yeah I bet she is...wait." Robin said trailing off, Lissa's words sinking in to him.

"The Exalt is your...sister? But then wouldn't that make both you and Chrom..."

"The prince and princess of Ylisse?" Frederick said, finishing Robin train of thought.

"Indeed so Robin. How did you remember milord's name but not that?"

"Chrom..I-I mean LORD Chrom!" Robin said, suddenly feeling very ashamed of himself for his loose conduct he had made with them up to this point.

"Haha, just Chrom suits me fine." Chrom said, brushing off Robin's statement.

"But you guys...you guys said you were SHEPHERDS!" Robin said, still baffled.

"That we are," Chrom said with a grin. "We just have a lot more sheep than you realize."

"Wow..." Robin said, taking all of it in.

"So you and Lissa are the Prince and Princess of Ylisse huh? Heh, no wonder Frederick has to take all of your teasing."

"Quite true." Frederick said, practically unable to fathom the meaning of a joke.

"Oh the sacrifices I make for the good of the realm."

"Oh come on Frederick ol' buddy! Lighten up." Chrom said, giving Frederick and friendly punch in the shoulder and then immediately regretting his decision.

"OWW! Damn, I need to learn to stop doing that." Chrom said while shaking away the pain in his right hand.

"It seems the exalt is going back to her quarters in the capitol building." Frederick said while looking at the direction the exalt and her guard were heading."

"Hey, lets go meet up with her and introduce her to Robin!" Lissa said brightly.

"Alright, sounds good." Chrom said. "Want to go meet my other sister Robin?"

"Yeah, sounds like fun." Robin said gleefully while walking along with the trio to the capitol building.

Maybe being a Shepherd wouldn't be that bad of a thing.

"Frederick, Lissa, go up ahead and wait for us at the capitol building." Chrom said, waving for them to move up ahead. "I want to talk to Robin for a little bit."

"If you think it wise Milord." Frederick nodded while riding off ahead with Lissa. Chrom and Robin trailed a noticeable distance behind them, blending into the busy city streets.

"So..." Chrom began, while looking over to a still amazed Robin as the man kept scanning the city.

"Yeah?" Robin asked, coming to his senses to listen to Chrom.

"It's about Frederick." Chrom said, his cheeriness from earlier immediately fading.

"I'm sorry he's been pretty harsh with you recently. I don't know why we disagreed so heavily over you. We hardly ever disagree on anything..."

Talk about Deja Vu...

Continuing from where he trailed off, Chrom said,

"You've probably put the pieces together by now, but Frederick and I are pretty close, we've known each other for a very long time. Still, I know he's pretty strict with getting close to strangers, but I've never seen him act that rashly before. I'm sorry Robin."

"It's alright, I already talked to him about it on the way here." Robin said, staring at Chrom.

"We've made up, and we have put it all behind us. Me and Frederick are cool now."

"What? Really?" Chrom asked, shocked.

"I assumed the topic of the conversation you two had earlier, but definitely not the outcome! What exactly did he tell you?"

"Well," Robin began. "He pretty much told me the same thing you just told me, only in reverse. He talked about how you two are close friends, and that it baffled him that you were so trusting of me out of nowhere."

Taking a breath, Robin added, "And on that note..."

"Yes Robin?" Chrom asked, taking in what the man had said.

"Why have you been so trusting of me?" Robin asked seriously. "I mean, Naga knows I've done nothing to deserve your trust."

"Of course you've done something." Chrom said, his smile returning. "You helped to save a village being attacked by bandits. And you didn't even know those people. Yet you helped to save their lives. And you single handedly saved us all from a group of those deathly creatures back in the forest."

"To the first, being the good guy is just kinda in my nature I guess. I don't have any evil thoughts."

At least I don't while I'm conscious anyway...

"And to the second, that attack that saved us wasn't even caused by me if we're being honest. I had no control over that. And even then, you were trusting of me before I even did any of that. You just found me out of nowhere and CHOOSE to help me. ...Why did you do that?"

"Why?" Chrom asked, honestly thinking of a legitimate response. "Well, I guess that that's just in my nature as well."

"What do you mean?" Robin asked.

"I have a desire to help people who cannot help themselves." Chrom said honestly."If it's in my power to help someone, I will."

"That's a noble cause for sure," Robin began. "But that's also a very risky and potentially dangerous thing. What if Frederick was right and I was some sort of spy? I could have killed you right then and there. Or at the very least escape and tell my commanders about your whereabouts. Nobility and Longevity don't always go hand-in-hand Chrom."

"Haha, but that's why I have Frederick around." Chrom said, shrugging Robin's concerns off.

"Maybe so, but still..." Robin protested.

"Robin, enough." Chrom said firmly. "I've heard your concerns, and I know that you're heart is in the right place. But it's just who I am. If I found another man face down in a middle of a field this very minute, I would do the same thing again. Besides, what If I hadn't of helped you?"

"I know, and I greatly appreciate what you did." Robin said. "But I just don't want you to get stabbed in the back."

"Haha, you know, you sound just like Frederick." Chrom laughed, giving Robin a friendly slap on the back as they walked along.

I don't know if I should take that as a compliment or an insult...

"And on top of that..." Chrom began, growing seriously yet again. "There's something about you Robin."

"What do you mean?"

"I mean, I feel like there's sort of foreign bond that I feel with you. I've never felt this way before with anyone. Not even with my own sisters. It's not a family bond, it's more so like a bond of great friendship. It's like I feel that you will become my best friend, and I don't know why. You said you remembered my name right? Hell, you remembered my name before you could even remember yours. Maybe you know what I'm talking about."

"I..I think I kinda do." Robin said, running a hand through his messy white hair. "I feel like I've met you before in my previous life...I know that's crazy since you've never met me before, but I still feel it."

Coming to a complete stop and starting at Robin blankly, Chrom paused for a long moment before bursting out laughing.

"You know what? Maybe we're both crazy." Chrom laughed. "But whatever the case, I'm glad I met you Robin."

"The feeling's mutual." Robin smiled back.

Finally walking in to the capitol building and into the throne room, Chrom and Robin made their way next to Frederick and Lissa to greet the exalt known as Emmeryn.

The exalt was seated upon her throne with a female royal guard at her side. The guard had a welcoming smile on her face as the Shepherds walked in. However the guard's smiled paled in comparison the one on the exalt's face; her face beaming with delight as the quartet entered the throne room.

Robin was able to get a better look at the exalt as he walked in the throne room with Chrom. Emmeryn was wearing a greenish yellow robe which was perfectly matched with the yellow outfit beneath it. Emmeryn had bright blonde hair exactly like Lissa, however her hair was in long locks on both sides of her head, the hair flowing down to her sides. As Robin and Chrom walked in closer, Emmeryn stood up from her throne to greet them. Robin noticed that the woman was noticeably taller than Lissa as well, standing nearly eye to eye with himself. She also had what seemed to be some sort of image on her Forehead as well. The only other place Robin had seen that image was tattooed on Chrom's sword arm.

*Wow...*Robin thought as a slight blush creeped to his face. *She's like Lissa only more...beautiful.*

Robin quickly shook his questionable thoughts from his mind as Emmeryn greeted them.

"Ah..." Emmeryn said in a very calm and feminine voice. "The mighty Shepherds have returned!" the exalt said with a chuckle. "How fared you all?"

"We are all doing well Emm,"Chrom spoke up, greeting his sister. "We won't have to worry about any bandit attacks for a while. However we met some sort of violent creatures in the forests on the way to Ylisstol."

"My sincere apologies." the female royal guard spoke up. "My Pegasus knights should have intercepted them. They have been pushed to the outskirts of Ylisse, so we won't have to worry about them attacking the capitol."

"Don't blame yourself Phila," Chrom said. "It was wise of you to stay here with Emmeryn to make sure she was safe. Although, I will admit that we may not have made it out alive if not for this man we found along the way."

"Ah, you speak of your new companion here?" Emmeryn asked, staring directly at Robin, who had did his best to stay in the background.

"You helped Chrom and his Shepherds fend off against the creatures from the forest?" Emmeryn asked kindly.

"Um, yes, yes your highness. But it was no trouble at all." Robin said, trying not to make a fool of himself in front of the ruler of Ylisse.

"Haha, at ease young fellow." Emmeryn said, waving her hand. "You risked your life to gain the trust of my brother. And for

that, you have won my trust as well."

"Thank you, lord Emmeryn." Robin said, making a pitiful excuse for a bow.

"And Frederick, Lissa, you trust this man as well?" Emmeryn asked.

"I sure do!" Lissa beamed. "You should have seen how he handled those freaks back in the forest! It was amazing!"

"And what say you Frederick?" Emmeryn asked, turning to the armored knight.

I'm going to mentally cross my fingers while actually crossing my fingers...

Frederick gave nothing more than a simple nod for a "yes".

Good enough...

Turning back at Robin again, Emmeryn asked, "What's your name brave one?"

"It's Robin." Robin said straightly.

"Ah...Robin. What a charming name." Emmeryn said kindly.

Wow, Emmeryn must be like the living breathing version of this city. Robin thought. *She truly is the very spirit of peace and harmony.*

Cutting in, Chrom said, "Robin seems to have a knack for strategy and tactics. He could be a very valuable asset to the Shepherds. And as such, I've decided to make him the official tactician for the Shepherds. That is...if you accept Robin."

At once, all eyes turned to face Robin. Taking a gulp, Robin looked straight at Chrom and said,

"It would do me no greater honor."

"Then it's settled then!" Chrom said excitedly.

"Welcome aboard sir Robin." Frederick said to Robin with a grin.

"Wonderful," Emmeryn said with a smile. "But now Chrom, we need to hold a war council meeting about what our next step is going to be against this new enemy."

"Of course." Chrom said, turning back to face Emmeryn.

"Heh, I think that's our cue Robin." Lissa said, tugging on the newly dubbed tactician's coat. "Come on, there's some other Shepherds that I want you to meet at the barracks."

"Wait, there's MORE of you guys?" Robin said while being dragged along by Lissa out of the throne room.

Things just keep getting better and better...

Author's Note

Sweet Naga, writing fan fiction is far more time consuming than I ever expected. Only four chapters, and I think I've invested at least 30 hours into writing this. But you know what? It's all worth it. It's worth it to know that you guys appreciate what I'm doing and send me feedback about it. Thank you all again for your continued support. I can't wait until more Shepherds show up. That's when the REAL fun can begin. BWAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA

(Note to self: never do an evil laugh ever again).

Anyway, let's keep moving forward everyone. Nagaspeed!

Chapter 5: Chapter 5

Author's Note

OMG! Both Robin and Lucina announced for the new smash bros! It's too much awesomeness to handle. I'm so excited, (and I just can't hide it). Yep, I just went there. Anyway, here we are at Chapter 5 guys. I'm sorry for the fairly long update, but I've been out of town for the past few days, and I've been slacking with using my PC in general. But the show must go on!

This chapter is where the personality of Robin starts to take shape. I know that he's gone from a uber raged maniac to a free spirited guy within just two chapters, and I've been trying to find some middle ground between the two. Hopefully you guys will like the way I handle Robin, but since he's by far the most diverse character in the game, I know I'm probably gonna get some flak on characterization on him. COME AT ME BRO!

Also, some people have had some raised eyebrows over Robin's attraction to Emmeryn. Well, I'm planning on giving Robin a little bit of Virion in him, so in other words, he considers almost all the females characters he meets to be attractive or interesting in some way. I'm doing this 1: so that Robin can have a lot of support dialogue with the characters, and 2: to troll you guys over who Robin's eventual waifu will be. IT'S A WIN-WIN!

So, keep reviewing and giving me tips guys. I know I sound like a broken record, but you guys are all so awesome. I mean that. I swear that there is not a single review that goes unnoticed, and I do my best to incorporate your thoughts and ideas into the story. So help me make this story more awesome guys!

Oh, and on that note, one more thing to celebrate: 1000 views! How awesome is that?! Only 5 chapters in, and already this story has hit the 4 digit mark. That's 250 views per chapter on the average. (since nobody has read chapter 5 up to this point yet.) And to give the love back, when you send me reviews, include who you would like Robin to have a support conversation with, male or female, in your review. (please note the character has to be introduced in the story up to this point or at least will be introduced very shortly in the campaign.) I will (somewhat randomly) pick one reviewer's suggestion and make sure to have that conversation happen in chapter 6. So make sure to review to get in on this guys.

So anyway, here we go with chapter 5 (takes deep breath).

Robin let himself be dragged on by Lissa out into the open city streets as she beamed brightly over showing Robin the barracks.

"C'mon Robin!" The blonde girl exclaimed. "You're going to LOVE the rest of the Shepherds! I'm sure you'll make friends with them very quickly."

"Yeah, I seem to have a knack for making friends out of the blue, don't I?" Robin replied with a smirk as the girl led him through the bustling city.

"So is the barracks is in the main city?" Robin asked conversationally as Lissa finally slowed down her pace a little.

"Nope, it's on the outskirts. It's located right near the open road out of Ylisstol going north." Lissa explained. "It acts as kinda a staging area if bandits ever got bold enough to raid the capitol or if a foreign diplomat or delegate were to visit Ylisstol."

"And all of the Shepherds are at the barracks now?" Robin asked.

"I think so," Lissa said. "Many of them went off to go do their own thing, but they were told to wait somewhat near the barracks until me, Chrom, and Frederick got back."

"I see..." Robin mused as the two raced past the last of Ylisstol's main buildings.

Ugh, this girl sure is energetic... I hate to imagine what a child of hers would be like...

"C'mon slowpoke!" Lissa teased, as she grasped tightly to the sleeve of Robin's dark coat and lead him along.

"It would be a little easier if you didn't treat my coat like a piece of tug rope." Robin deadpanned, doing his best to keep up with the girl.

"AllIlmost there..." Lissa said excitedly as the two finally passed the last part of the main city.

Robin saw the barracks up ahead. It was a sizable building; coated brown and had windows on all sides. There was a

horse stable to the side of it; probably where Sully and Frederick mounted their horses Robin guessed. The horses were bare however; stripped of their armor, and had nothing around them, save for a bucket of food.

"This way, they're inside!" Lissa beckoned to Robin as they went around to the front of the barracks. There was no door to the place, so Lissa and Robin just walked right in, and Robin was immediately greeted to the other Shepherds. The inside of the barracks was a spacious place, and was filled with racks of various weapons such as swords and lances among the walls, and bails of hay surrounding all the back walls and corners.

Looking at the new faces, Robin first noticed a brown haired woman with dainty pinkish white armor standing in front of him. Next to her was a buff shirtless man with a very cocky composure and wild blonde hair to match the look. Robin then noticed Virion and Sully off to the side corner of the barracks, both of them giving warm similes to Robin.

"Hey, who's the new kid on the block?" The shirtless blonde man spoke up, making some sort of ridiculous greeting face with his tongue flailing in and out of his mouth.

"Teach always welcomes new faces!" The blonde man continued.

"Hehe, Teach? Is that you're name now Vaike?" Lissa chuckled lightly.

"And I always thought people were just born lacking wits. Can it be taught?"

Ohh buuurn! Robin thought to himself with a simile, studying the interactions of the new people he was meeting.

"Haha!" The blonde man known as Vaike laughed heartily. "Never doubt the Vaike!"

Wait what? ...The man didn't even get the insult. He sure isn't the brightest of people I've met.

Going blank for a second, Vaike thought again about what Lissa had said before his eyes lit up.

"Hey wait a minute, was that an insult?" Vaike asked while cocking his head at Lissa.

At that Lissa burst out laughing. "Oh, you just never change do you Vaike?"

"Oh hardy har har!" Vaike said sarcastically; the wind taken out of him. "Seriously though, who's the stranger?"

"No one's stranger than you Vaike..." Lissa began, still chuckling at Vaike's unique antics. "But let me introduce you to...Robin!" Lissa said with a big smile on her face while gesturing at Robin. Robin smiled back at his new comrades as Vaike went up to him.

"Nice to meet ya squirt!" Vaike said with a laugh. "You seem like a pretty alright guy. The white hair is kinda different though. I might have to start calling you an old geezer!" Vaike laughed while friendly slapping Robin's shoulder.

Joining in, Lissa said, "You should see AALLL the tricks that Robin has up his sleeve! He's a wiz at magic, he can wield a sword, and he's got a knack for tactics. He can do it all!"

"Oh yeah?" Vaike replied mischievously. "Well, can he do THIS?" Vaike said while making a very loud and potent burp, causing most everyone to reel back in disgust.

"Ugh, sir Vaike that was abhorrent!" Virion snapped, walking up towards the man. "You disgrace the more noble sex with your buffoonery."

"Hey now, don't get your pantaloons in a twist pretty boy. At least I can get chicks to notice me!"

"If by 'notice' you mean think of you as the the pea brained of the group, then yes." Virion retorted.

"Hey, who are you calling 'pea brained'?!" Vaike snapped, getting worked up in a most over exaggerative way.

"Well, if you had a brain at all, you would be able to figure out who I was insulting wouldn't you?" Virion huffed.

"That's enough! Both of you!" An unknown female voice called out. At that moment, a prissy looking blonde girl with some sort of of pinkish yellow clothing that looked like it was made from the finest of tailors ran in through the barracks' back entrance. Robin mentally slapped himself for not noticing the barrack's second entrance sooner.

The blonde girl with clothing lavish enough to rival Virion's huffed at the two bickering men and took out some sort of parasol that she was holding in her back hand. She then used it to whack Vaike upside his head, causing Vaike to make a expressive "OWW!"

"Vaike, what manner of buffoonery are you causing now?" The stuck up girl snapped. "I heard your disgusting little digestive outburst from a mile away! Must you pollute even the air with your stupidity?"

*This is definitely not Vaike's day...*Robin thought, standing out of the way to watch everything go down.

The prissy woman then looked at Virion. "And the only reason that I'm not going to scold you is because at least you had manners enough to speak up on Vaike's less-than-noble attributes."

"Ah, milady, so you too realize the value of nobility. Perhaps you and I could-" Virion was cut off mid sentence by the woman.

"Don't even think about it Virion." The woman stared down at Virion coldly.

"Ah, Lissa!" the woman turned to face the smaller blonde girl. "I've must have sprouted 12 gray hairs worrying over you! How have you fared my dear?"

"I've been fine Maribelle." Lissa said warmly. "There was no need for you to worry about me."

"Ah. Very well then." The woman called Maribelle said.

"And you!" She turned to face Robin, who lit up in shock with the random spotlight that had been turned on him.

"Who exactly do you think YOU are?" Maribelle huffed, sizing Robin up from everything from his clothing style, to his composure.

"Oh come on Maribelle," Lissa began, trying to defend Robin. "He hasn't even done anything."

"Even so, I want to see if his standards are high class." Maribelle said, still staring at Robin.

"Gods forbid we have TWO Vaikes in our midst after all."

Taking in a gulp, Robin walked up to Maribelle to make acquaintances.

"Hello er...Maribelle." Robin said, trying to be as friendly and curt as possible.

"No need to be shaking in my presence. Show some composure! Be proud to be who you are. ...Even if you are a commoner."

"Err...right," Robin said, trying to straighten himself up and be as proud and noble looking as possible. "My name is Robin by the way."

"Robin..." Maribelle said, looking Robin in the eye. "A respectable name. None the less, you're not entirely unsalvageable. It will take much work and dedication, but you show some promise of being a decent noble."

Sheesh, and I thought Virion was too overblown with the whole 'noble' thing.

Looking up to face Robin, the brown haired girl spoke up.

"Have you seen Chrom by chance, umm...Robin?" The girl said shyly and nervously.

Turning to face the girl, Maribelle went over to her and starting being surprisingly compassionate to her.

"Aw, poor Sumia," Maribelle said, putting a hand to her side.

"She's just been beside herself in concern ever since Chrom and his team left." Maribelle said, talking out to Robin and the others.

"Well, um, of course I would be concerned!" the girl named Sumia protested. "He's our captain and leader, it's only natural to fret over him when it's been days since he's returned."

"He's in some sort of important meeting." Robin said to Sumia. "He should be here soon enough."

"If by 'soon' if mean now, then yes." Chrom said, walking in behind Robin from the front entrance of the barracks.

"Chrom!" Sumia yelled girlishly. While running up to meet him, the dainty girl tripped over what seemed to be nothing and fell down straight on her face.

Ouch, that must of hurt. What's this girl's deal with Chrom?

"Woah, you ok there Sumia?" Chrom asked in a worried manner as the girl somehow immediately got back up on her feet.

"Yes, yes I'm fine," Sumia said meekly. "It must be these boots of mine or...something."

"Just try to be more careful," Chrom said with a sigh of relief. "I honestly have never seen a person so talented at tripping over nothing." Chrom said with a chuckle.

Sumia immediately starting blushing and turned away in embarrassment.

"In any case," Chrom began. "We've been given new orders. We are to march to Regna Ferox to request additional troops and support. We leave once Frederick gets here, which will probably be any minute."

Robin's mind drew a blank at Regna Ferox as he tried desperately to remember.

"Uh..what's Regna Ferox?" Robin asked, giving up on trying to remember something.

"It is another neighboring nation to Ylisse," Chrom began. "It's to the north of us. Ylisse has a good standing with them. Even though we have no official military alliance with them, we usually can convince them to join us if we go to war."

"But I thought Ylisse wasn't at war with anyone." Robin wondered.

"We might as well be," Chrom said. "Plegia is getting more bold with their raids, and it's only a matter of time until it's all out war. And now with the added danger of the Risen, Ylisse needs every man they can get."

"Risen?" Robin asked.

"Yes, that's the official name we have given to those creatures that we fought back in the forest. I heard Marth call them that while we were fighting them, and I suggested the name to Emm and the rest of Ylisse's council. We were in agreement."

"Well, Risen it is then." Robin said.

Growing serious, Robin thought about himself and the other new Shepherds that he met.

"Chrom..." Robin began, looking at Chrom with concern. "Do you think we should tell the others?"

"Tell the others what?" Chrom asked, puzzled.

"About me. About me being an amnesiac. Do you think they could trust me like you, Lissa, and Frederick have?"

"Ah, your loss of memory..." Virion stepped in, having a charming, yet still serious look to him. "Chrom and Frederick told Sully and I as much while you were unconscious on the road to Ylisstol. It was a peculiar story indeed. And I shall admit, I had a quite the time believing it myself. But I think that a man's actions speak louder than his past deeds, or lack of memory thereof. And from your actions Robin, you are a fine man that I would gladly follow into the field of battle."

"Here here!" Sully joined in. "I watched you single handedly kick the living crap out of all those 'Risen' back there. Hot damn was it a sight to see! You've got my respect Robin."

"You may be a commoner, but you've gotten the respect of dear Lissa and Lord Chrom, so I shall offer you my benefit of the doubt as well." Maribelle said, following suit.

"Yeah, you can count Teach in too!" Vaike remarked with a laugh. "Ol' Robin here seems pretty tough. I can't wait to go into battle with you to show ya how it's done!"

"You have my backing as well." Sumia said. "You helped to save Captain Chrom and the others. We all seem to owe you a debt."

"I'm also at your side!" an unknown man in heavy armor said to Robin from a corner of the barracks, but shook his head in dismay when no one noticed him. "Anyone hear me? Hello? Nevermind then.."

"I'm glad you all trust Robin," Chrom said with a smile, completely unaware of the armored man's presence like everyone else in the barracks. "Because from now on, you'll be taking orders from him. Robin is our new official tactician."

All the Shepherds smiled and/or cheered in agreement, and Robin felt a sense of belonging that he had never felt before. At least not that he could recall.

This is my home...my family. Robin thought with a smile.

The celebrations came to a halt as Frederick rode into the barracks.

"Milord!" Frederick huffed as he quickly unsaddled his horse. "I have arrived. My apologies for the delay. I was clearing the road ahead of any rocks and debris for our journey."

"What? You did all that?" Chrom asked, shocked. "How far did you travel?"

"Several miles ahead Milord. It was not much trouble at all."

Wow, the man's diligent, I'll give him that.

"In any case milord," Frederick continued. "We best leave out now while the sun is still high."

"Agreed," Chrom said. "Come all, we leave for Regna Ferox!"

"Wait," Sumia spoke up, getting Chrom's attention.

"Yes Sumia?" Chrom asked.

"Well, it's just that...maybe I'm not ready for a proper mission yet." Sumia said, hanging her head.

"I don't even have a battle-ready pegasus to take into battle. And I don't know much else besides animals. I would probably just get in the way."

"You wouldn't get in the way Sumia." Chrom said kindly. "You could keep to the back and watch us handle things. It would be a good learning experience."

"Very well," Sumia said, smiling a little. "Thank you Captain."

Turning away from Sumia, Chrom turned out to face the open road from the outside of the barracks.

"Shepherds!" Chrom beckoned. "To Regna Ferox!"

"So Chrom..." Robin began, as the task force of Shepherds walked on from Ylisse's territory further north.

"Yes Robin?" Chrom asked, looking back behind him from being in the front of the group.

"What if the people at Regna Ferox won't help us?"

"Haha, you're not really an optimist are you Robin?" Chrom asked, shrugging off the question.

"I am TOO an optimist thank you very much." Robin said in a snarky manner. "It's just that in my line of work, you always have to be prepared for every outcome and have a backup plan."

"That may be true Robin..." Chrom said, trailing off. "But I think that we should get the support we need to deal with the Risen and Plegia with little trouble. Still though, I appreciate your thinking Robin. I think you're going to make a fine tactician."

"Heh, I hope so too." Robin said warmly. "But I think I'm up to the challenge. After all, how bad could it be?"

Robin's conversation with Chrom was cut off as a man in green knight armor and curly light brown hair raced up to them.

"*huff huff* W-wait up!" The man wheezed as we ran up through the Shepherds to Robin and Chrom.

"Stahl, what are you doing up here? I thought you were back with the group."

"I wasn't in the group at all!" Stahl said, catching his breath. "Why was it that I am the last person to know about the expedition to Regna Ferox? ...Well, me and Miriel that is."

"I entrusted that job to Vaike," Chrom said looking back to the buff blonde man behind him.

"Heh, I told ol' Stahl about it...I think." Vaike said, walking up to the front of the group and scratching his head.

"You think?" Chrom said, irritated.

"I know!" Vaike protested. "The Vaike never forgets. ...I just sometimes don't always remember as well."

"So you didn't tell Stahl about the journey then?" Chrom said flatly.

"Er...no." Vaike admitted.

"I swear Vaike, you would forget your own name if you didn't constantly repeat it yourself." Chrom said, annoyed with the man.

"Heh. Oops. Well, it's water under the ol' bridge right? We're still friends right ol' Stahl buddy?"

"Yeah, I guess." Stahl said calmly. "Although I had to completely skip breakfast over all of this. Miriel too. There was biscuits and cakes and muffins and...oh well never mind."

Turning to face Robin, Stahl also added, "Oh and Miriel is one of our mages and an astute scholar. She should catch up soon."

"We'll slow down our pace so she can catch up." Chrom said.

"So...you're name is Stahl right?" Robin asked, holding out his hand for a hand shake.

"Yeah, it is." Stahl said warmly, meeting Robin hand with his own and shaking it firmly.

"Stahl is a Shepherd as well, and one of our best cavaliers." Chrom said, looking at the green armored man. "And speaking of which, where is your horse Stahl?"

"Oh, right. Miriel is walking it along with her. I'll have my old girl back once she gets here. Hopefully we won't run into any trouble before then."

As if on que to Stahl's statement, Frederick rushed up to Chrom from up ahead on his scouting duty.

"Milord Chrom! A pack of Risen have the road up ahead blocked in a battle formation. There's no way around them, we must push through!"

"Me and my big mouth..." Stahl said with a sigh.

The Shepherds made it up to the roadway onward to Regna Ferox. It was a hilly plain, with a river running parallel to the trail. A pack of 14 Risen had the path completely blocked, and 2 Risen were stationed above on a hill to the north west to spy out any approachers. When the lookouts spotted the Shepherds, they immediately rushed back to the back of the group to make a stand there.

Robin took in the scene of the battlefield, trying to form a plan of attack in his mind. Robin's train of thought was broken when Vaike exclaimed, "My axe! Where in the hell is my axe?!"

"Vaike, this is no time for japes." Chrom said seriously while glaring at the man.

"No, seriously. I JUST had it!" Vaike outraged.

"Wow Vaike, this must be a new record for you. You've lost your weapons 5 times in one week." Lissa teased.

"Dont'cha be ganging up on me too!" Vaike exclaimed to Lissa while frantically looking around.

"Is this the axe you were looking for?" A glasses wearing woman said, walking up to Vaike from behind. The woman had dark red low cut hair, and wore a large mage hat which shaded over most of her head. She also wore brownish black robes which indicated her as a tome user.

"Ah! Miriel!" Vaike shouted with glee as the woman held up his battle axe to him. "You're a lifesaver!"

"That goes double on my account!" Stahl added, looking at the green armored horse that Miriel had brought alongside her. "You brought my horse! Thank you so much!"

"The horse proved to be quite the reliable creature to be accompanied by." Miriel said as she pushed her glasses into place and walked up to the two men. "Her attributes of a beast of war have hardened it's resolve to be loyally at your side. You have trained your steed in a acceptable fashion Stahl."

Yep, Miriel is definitely the brainy type...

"And as for you," Miriel continued, looking at Vaike. "Do try to be more knowledgeable as to your weapon's whereabouts. Your chances of being a valuable asset to the Shepherds are somewhat high when you wield your axe into combat. When you do not however, your chances of being of any use to the Shepherds are very minute indeed."

"I have no clue what kind of gibberish your speaking as usual Miriel, but thanks for the axe anyway." Vaike said with a big smile as he took his axe from Miriel.

Rolling his eyes, Chrom said, "Now that that's settled, what's our plan of attack Robin?"

To Robin's surprise however, Frederick interjected, "Milord, perhaps it may be wise for us to devise our own individual attacks?"

"How do you mean Frederick?" Chrom asked.

"Robin is still quite new to being a tactician. One mustn't push a new recruit too hard less he burns out before he starts. Additionally, Robin does not yet know the way most of the Shepherds move and operate, so he could take this chance to study how the Shepherds function as a group so he can properly lead us in future battles. I believe this battle can be won with little trouble."

"That's some sound reasoning Frederick." Chrom said happily. "Alright then, it's settled. Shepherds! How about we show Robin how we do things!"

"Haha! Finally!" Vaike roared, holding out his axe in a battle stance and leading the charge up ahead with Chrom right beside him.

Robin hung to the back and closely studied the attack actions of all the Shepherds; learning their strengths and weaknesses.

Hmm, Vaike and Chrom are definitely the go getters of the group. Robin thought as the two warriors locked weapons with the first group of Risen.

Robin then watched as Frederick and Stahl rode off to the side over the large hill and preformed a flanking maneuver on the Risen's left flank.

So the cavilers can ride up distances far faster than most other units. They might prove to be the best flankers.

Virion stayed to a distance behind the main group near where Robin was standing and expertly shot of a string of arrows at the Risen's position; nearly all of the arrows hitting their mark.

Wow, so Virion's boasts actually have some merit...

Sumia stayed to the back as well; keenly watching Chrom as the blue haired man plowed through the creatures with Vaike at his side.

Sully charged in, using the opening that Virion had given her to her advantage as she charged into the Risen's right flank.

Lissa and Maribelle stayed out of the main fighting and stationed themselves closely behind Chrom and Vaike; casting out heals with their staves as the two men fought on.

Hmm, so Maribelle is a healer as well...

Miriel went in last to back up Sully. She reached into her robes and pulled out a red covered spell book and quickly unleashed some sort of minor fire attack.

Miriel seems to be pretty skilled in magic, I have to keep that in mind...

Before Robin could do much else studying, the battle was over; all the Risen evaporated into purple mist.

"Wow, that was awesome!" Robin yelled out to Chrom as he raced up to greet him.

"Haha, those bastards weren't nothing to the Vaike and his trusty axe!" Vaike boasted as he tried to steal Chrom's glory.

"Were you able to take any good mental notes?" Chrom asked Robin, ignoring Vaike's boasting.

"Yeah, I sure did," Robin said excitedly. "You all have very unique talents and abilities. Hopefully I'll be able to put them all to good use in future battles. Although I did feel kinda bad that I wasn't able to help out."

"It's quite all right Robin," Chrom said while putting his sword away. "you probably helped out far more than you realize. At least in the long run."

"I hope your right." Robin said with a smile.

Suddenly, a blue armored soldier raced in from behind the Shepherd lines yelling for Chrom.

"Hold, lord Chrom!" The man yelled as he caught up to him. "I am a messenger from Ylisstol delivering a important message from Exalt Emmeryn.

"Go ahead then." Chrom beckoned to the Ylissean soldier.

"The fair miss Maribelle is to return to the capitol immediately." The soldier said.

"Whatever for?" Chrom asked.

"I do not know sire," The messenger said meekly. "But it was a direct order from lord Emmeryn herself.

"Very well then." Maribelle said, priming herself up for the journey back. "I could prep my horse while I'm there. Take care Lissa."

"I'll be fine Maribelle." Lissa said with a smile.

"I know you will darling," Maribelle said kindly as she turned to walk with the soldier back to Ylisstol.

"Huh, I wonder what that was about." Robin wondered out loud as Maribelle walked out of sight.

"Whatever it is, I'm sure Emm will take care of it." Chrom said. "Now onward friends, we're wasting daylight!"

The brisk afternoon was setting in as the Shepherds marched on to Regna Ferox. Chrom stopped the group however as he spotted something up ahead.

"Frederick, tell the Shepherds behind us to stop. Robin, Lissa, come with me."

"What is it Chrom?" Robin asked.

"Look over there." Chrom pointed out to some sort of white creature up ahead to the side of the trail.

As the trio got closer to it, Lissa gasped, "Hey, is that what I think it is?"

As the three of them walked up to the idle creature, Chrom said, "yep, that's definitely a Pegasus all right. I wonder what it's doing all alone down here."

"Huh, so that's a Pegasus." Robin said, studying the foreign animal. "It just looks like a horse with wings to me."

"Pegasi and horses are distant cousins," Chrom explained. "They behave in a very similar manner and usually eat the same types of food. They are friendly creatures, so long as they have a good master to take care of them."

Chrom slowly walked up to the winged creature, holding out his hands to show that he was a friend.

"Easy girl... easy..."

Chrom jolted back and fell to the ground as the pegasus shrieked in fear when Chrom got closer to it.

"Woah, take it easy!" Robin shouted to the pegasus. However it didn't do any good as the creature flapped its wings in defense and stomped its hooves.

"The beast is crazed!" Chrom shouted as he got back on his feet. "Maybe we should just put the thing out of it's misery."

"No! Wait!" Sumia said, running up to the group out of nowhere.

"Sumia?" Chrom asked, surprised. "Hey what are you doing? Stay back! That pegasus will kill you!"

Not listening to Chrom's warning, Sumia carefully walked out to the spooked creature, making a quiet "shhh" sound to easy the beast's nerves.

"There there girl, take it easy now. Sumia won't hurt you."

To Chrom's and everyone else's surprise, the pegasus suddenly calmed down at Sumia's words, allowing the woman to walk up to it and stroke its mane.

"That's a good girl..." Sumia cooed, petting the pegasus gently.

"Wow Sumia..." Chrom said, baffled. "You must really have a way with animals.

"Aww thanks," Sumia said with a smile. "You guys should go on ahead though. I'll stay here and take care of this little cutey poo."

"This little...what?" Chrom said, with a slightly embarrassed look on his face. "But are you sure you'll be fine Sumia?"

"I'm sure Captain, don't worry about me." Sumia said warmly.

"Well, alright then." Chrom said, leaving Sumia to care for her new found pegasus.

"Alright Shepherds!" Chrom called out to the rest of the group. "Let's move onward! We need to cover as much ground before nightfall."

"Take care Sumia." Robin said kindly as he waved back to the girl before falling back in line with Chrom and the rest of the Shepherds.

Marth stealthy made his way to Regna Ferox's walls, carefully making sure not to be seen by the border guards.

"Those are some high walls..." Marth said, looking up to the walls of the city in the cold night sky.

Turning a corner to find a better access point, Marth stopped and looked over his shoulders as he heard two border guards talking to each other.

"Any word back from the champion?" Marth heard one patrol guard say.

"Lord Lon'qu is still in the middle of his search." the other guard replied.

"What about Khan Basilio? Has he found anyone?"

"He's probably not even searching." the second guard said. "Knowing him, he's probably in the tournament ring sharpening up his skills or in the mess hall drinking up all our ale."

The other guard laughed, and the two of them walked on out of sight to patrol another section of the castle walls.

"Getting inside won't be easy indeed..." Marth said quietly to himself.

Marth instantly went pale when out of nowhere a gruff voice called out, "Hey, you!"

Marth turned around to see a bulk of a man behind him. The man was dark skinned and had a eye patch over his right eye. He also wore shiny gold armor from his head to toe, with a white fur piece sticking out from the top of the armor to support his bald head.

"You got some business being in my castle?" the big man asked intimidatingly.

"You're...you're the Khan of Regna Ferox." Marth said, mouth agape. "You're Basilio!"

"Aye," Basilio said, eyeing down Marth with his one good eye. "And who the hell are you, and what are you doing here?"

"I'm a wandering swordsman..." Marth trailed off. "I want to fight the strongest warriors in the world, and a thought that this would be the best place to look."

"Hah, and you thought right lad!" Basilio laughed heartily. "I don't have any clue who you are, but if you're looking for a good fight, I know just the man for you. Lon'qu! Come on out!"

At that, a tall and lean man walked up behind Basilio. He had messy black hair entangling itself, and wore a unique swordsman robe with fur lining to help to adapt to Regna Ferox's climate. The man carried a long, very sharp sword with a orange handle to it to add to the man's already great intimidation factor. The man had a cold and expressionless look on his face, and Marth tensed up as the man stared at him.

Gods...he was back there the whole time? How long has he known I've been here? Marth wondered to himself.

"This man..." Basilio announced as the swordsman called Lon'qu walked up beside him. "This man is very good with a blade. He's the finest warrior I've got. And he is also representing West Ferox in the next tournament. I'm thinking of even making him my successor. Good enough for you to fight I wager?"

"Quite so," Marth said. Drawing his sword, Marth yelled out to Lon'qu, "Bring it!"

In a flash, Lon'qu had not only drawn his sword, but also began his attack, swinging high at Marth.

"You're fast!" Marth yelled as he rolled out of the way, narrowing dodging the attack.

Before Marth could regain his composure again, Lon'qu had already began his next attack; charging in at Marth's mid section.

Marth quickly parried the attack, which throw Lon'qu off, causing him to bury his face in Marth's chest. Lon'qu suddenly completely froze up, feeling a plumpness in Marth's chest that he didn't expect.

"You... you're a..." was all Lon'qu was able to get out as Marth took the opportunity to use an open palm to slam against Lon'qu's back, knocking the wind out of him. Lon'qu then stumbled and fell face first onto the cold ground below, sealing his defeat.

"Sheesh, what in the hell came over him?" Basilio wondered as Lon'qu laid on the ground, not bothering to get back up.

"Well, in any case, you're pretty damn good boy!" Basilio cheered. "I've never seen anyone parry Lon'qu like that before. How would you like to be a new champion for the upcoming tournament?"

"What?!" Marth exclaimed, taken back.

"It's a match between the east and west of Ferox to see who wins sovereignty of the land."

"I don't know..." Marth hesitated.

"You're not saying no are you? Didn't you say you wanted to fight the strong?"

Hmm, if I become his champion, I can enter the castle.

"You make a good case, Khan Basilio. Very well, I accept." Marth said with a nod.

This way, I might be able to determine where the gemstone is...

"All right! That's my boy!" Basilio said with a laugh. "Another win for Khan Basilio is coming my way!"

Growing somewhat serious again and looking at Marth's mask, Basilio asked, "What's your name kid?"

"You may call me Marth..."

Author's Note

Alright! Chapter 5 is finally done! How did you guys like the little 'Marth' exposition? I thought it would be a pretty neat idea, so I gave it a shot. Let me know if you wanna see more stuff like that, or stay focused on the main story with Robin. I'll try to upload chapters a little faster next time around. Don't worry, I'll stay active with this story, I'm too passionate to ever stop writing it. Anyways, keep being awesome guys! Nagaspeed!

Chapter 6: Chapter 6

Author's Note

Chapter 6 woot! Heh, you know, it's so awesome to see how far this story has come in this short time. Just to think that less than two months ago, I didn't even have a Fanfiction account. And now look at me! This is just too awesome. I love writing, and sharing it with other passionate writers and readers is just such a magical thing. Anyway, to business.

So overall, the Marth scene went over pretty well. I know it just came out of nowhere, but I thought it would be cool to show what Marth does in the in-between stuff with the Shepherds since the game never really shows it or makes mention of it. So I think I'll put more expositional stuff like that in the story when needed. Don't worry, I won't overdo it though. The title of the story is called ROBIN'S Journey after all.

Wow, I got an overwhelming plea to do some support interactions with Robin and Maribelle. And I agree with you guys: stuff with Robin and Maribelle is hardly ever done at all. And I'm going to remedy that. The only problem is, I don't think I can do it this chapter since I've got other stuff planned for Maribelle right now. (cough MISSION 5! cough) So yeah, but don't worry though, it will happen, that I promise you.

Also, I've gotten some complaints over Robin's character. Namely that he's too much like a rip off of the Robin from *Invisible Ties* or that he's too bipolar with his traits and how he interacts with the Shepherds. Well, if you haven't figured it out by now, I've got great respect for metallover and *Invisible Ties,* and it's true that that story is a great inspiration to my story and outlines for the characters, but I assure you that *Robin's Journey* is its own unique retelling of the game. I kinda felt that the in game Robin was (although cool) still felt like just a straightforward character with nothing much really standing out about him besides his knack for tactics. Sure, he has some awesome supports with people, but he never really has much character development unless it's for the purpose of the story's plot. And that's not so much a bad thing, it's just that when writing a retelling, it's makes Robin seem too predictable as a character, especially if you've played the game (which I'm guessing 99% of you have). So I wanted to create a Robin that was more quirky, and had more of a range to his personality and his character traits. Only thing is, metallover beat me to it. But I know metallover isn't the only one. There have been plenty of writers on the site who have crafted Robin to their own liking, without going too far out of line to make him a totally different character. So I'm pretty much doing the same thing. I want to create Robin to fit the way that I would see him as. A writer usually puts a lot of the things he's experienced and thought of into his story. So I'm using my (short) life experience to create a Robin that will be associated with the story I create. To each author his own.

But that being said, I am still a novice at writing; I'll tell that to anyone. And I've never tackled a story nearly this big and in depth before. So I'm bound to make plenty of blunders with characters and their traits. And I'm kinda just crafting Robin as I go along. With each chapter I write him as I would in vision him being for that specific scenario. I know things with Robin's character aren't really all that consistent at this point, but I think that soon I will find a character that I'm happy with and will stick to that outline. So please, just stick with me on this. When reading, I encourage you not to compare my Robin to the one in game or to that of other authors, but instead to the one that I am creating. If you see some things that seem out of character for MY Robin, then by all means point them out. Like I said in my first AN, this is a story that we are creating TOGETHER, so I want this story to stand on its own and be the best story it can be with the continued help of this growing fanbase and by the ideas presented to the table.

Phew, I'm glad that massive rant is over. Haha. This AN alone is longer than most FEA one-shots on the site. But anyway, let's just jump in to chapter six before I ramble on for much longer.

The early evening was setting in as the Shepherds stopped to set up camp for the night. A light snow began to fall as the Shepherds found an open field to start setting up the tents.

"Frederick, you and Sully remembered to pack the make shift tents right?" Chrom asked as Frederick unsaddled his horse.

"Yes milord," Frederick said while walking to the rear of his mount and pulling off of it several rolled up beige colored tents. "We have two extras since both Maribelle and Sumia had left our group."

"Set out the one for Sumia in case she comes back in the night." Chrom said while picking up one of the rolled up tents and putting it over his shoulder.

"A wise decision milord." Frederick said while carrying two tents over his shoulder and walking out to the open field.

"Will Sumia be ok out there alone?" Robin asked Chrom with concern.

"Sumia is actually a far better survivor than she gives herself credit for." Chrom said reassuringly. "Heh, once I remember how she rushed into a burning barn that a group of bandits had set on fire just to save one pegasus. The building was blazing so much that even Frederick was wary about going in. But Sumia went in without a second thought and rescued the pegasus all by herself. And she made it out with nary a burn mark."

"Wow..." Robin thought aloud. "Sumia seems to really care about animals."

"Yeah, that and pies." Chrom said with a chuckle.

"Pies?"

"It's a long story..." Chrom trailed off, while following Frederick out to the campsite. "Hey Robin, be sure to pick up one of those tents and set them out. If you have trouble setting it up, Frederick or myself will be happy to assist you."

"Alright then." Robin said while walking over to the rolled up tents.

"Oh, and Stahl," Chrom said, while turning back around. "Did you happen to remember the mobile furniture for the tents?"

"It just so happens I did," Stahl said while unloading some of the chairs and roll out beds from a large sack on the back of his mount. "Well...Miriel remembered it anyway. Hopefully there's enough for all the tents."

"If not, Frederick and I would be content to sleep on the ground." Chrom said, while turning back towards the campsite.

"Alright, here we go..." Robin said while going over to the tent pile. Picking up one, Robin immediately gasped at how surprisingly heavy it was.

"Gods, but this is heavy. How in the heck was Frederick able to carry two of these things?" Robin wheezed as he heaved the tent over his shoulder.

"Hey, you not afraid of that little thing are ya?" Sully teased as she copied Frederick's stance and picked up two of the tents. "Crap like this builds up good muscle mass. It keeps you in shape."

"True, but why the hell does it have to be so heavy?" Robin asked while slowly walking to the campsite. "What's in these things anyway?"

"Nothing," Sully shrugged, barely breathing heavy as she held her pace with Robin while carrying two of the tents. "But they're made from a very special fabric that's only produced in Ylisstol. It was made specifically for the Shepherds and made extra durable so they wouldn't be ravaged by the elements or any other crap like that."

"Still, I'm not sure it's worth breaking your back trying to carry them over." Robin said, taking in deep breaths.

And Chrom and Frederick carried them like they were nothing...maybe I AM out of shape.

Just as Sully was about to make a reply, Robin turned around to hear Vaike boasting about his muscles.

"Hah, you think you're hot stuff carryin' two of these things, eh Sully?" Vaike boasted. "Well, stand back for the Vaike! I can carry THREE of these things and not even break a sweat!"

"Hah! Don't make me laugh Vaike." Sully shot back as Vaike grouped three of the tents together and began to lift.

"S-see? No-nothing at...all..." Vaike wheezed before his arms gave out and the man fell over along with the three tents, making a big scene out of it as usual.

Heh, Vaike is a unique man if nothing else.

"HAR!" Sully belly laughed at the pitiful display Vaike made. "Not so easy is it muscle man?"

"Hey! That was just...a lesson! Yeah a lesson of what NOT to do when carryin' stuff. The Vaike would never blunder on purpose. But for now I'll carry just two to not make y'all feel bad."

Robin rolled his eyes and walked on as Vaike tried to save face.

Lissa walked up behind Vaike to carry the tent that he left behind.

"I got this one!" Lissa said happily as she bent down to pick up the tent. Her smile did a one-eighty as she couldn't even

lift the rolled up fabric off of the ground.

"Just...just give me a *pant* second guys." Lissa said as she resorted to just dragging the tent along with both of her hands and walking backwards as she tried her best to keep up with the others.

Heh, I gotta admit, that's actually pretty cute. Robin thought with a grin as he watched Lissa try desperately to lift the tent as she dragged it along.

"Hey Robin!" Chrom called out from ahead as he and Frederick had already gotten to the campsite. "After you set out your tent, you wanna help Frederick and I set up a campfire?"

"Yeah, that's fine." Robin called back as he neared the tent drop off point.

Maybe if I help start the fire, I'll get out of having to set up this blasted tent...

The sun slowly went down over the horizon as Robin cheered for having finally getting a spark to catch in the campfire.

"Yes, finally!" Robin said with a smile.

"Good job Robin," Chrom smiled back. "You're a pretty fast learner."

"Thank you Chrom. And you know, once I learn to get my magic under control, maybe I can just use a small lightning spell to create the campfire from now on. Just one little blast and BOOM!"

"...instant forest fire." Frederick said matter-of-factly from across the campfire.

"Well yeah, I guess that...could happen." Robin said, rubbing a hand through his hair.

Frederick sure doesn't pull any punches.

"Aw, don't be so hard on him." Chrom said with a laugh. "Robin's come a long way. Not a single explosive outburst all day." Chrom teased.

"Hey, I had no control over that and you know it!" Robin defended. "It just sorta...happened."

"I know Robin, it's water under the bridge." Chrom said calmly.

Looking out over to the tent area, Frederick said, "It seems Lissa is having trouble making her tent. I'll go over to assist her."

"Ok, thanks Frederick." Chrom said as the knight got up and walked over to Lissa's tent.

Robin and Chrom both stared into the burning fire, thinking about what to say. After over a minute of quiet, Chrom broke the silence.

"Do you think an outburst like that will ever happen again?" Chrom asked seriously as he stared at Robin over the flames.

"I...I don't know." Robin said honestly as he looked down to where his tattoo was over his right hand. The mark was covered over by his coat sleeve, and Robin wasn't sure if he wanted to let anyone see it yet.

"It felt as if it wasn't even me doing it."

"What do you mean?" Chrom asked.

"It felt as if someone or something was controlling me. I can't really explain it, but I assure you that what you saw back there wasn't me...at least I hope that wasn't me."

"Robin," Chrom began. "While I was at the meeting back in Ylisstol, I asked around about if anyone had ever known you or at least heard the name 'Robin' before."

"And?" Robin asked.

"And...nothing. Not a clue. I even asked people who were visiting that were not of Ylisse, and no one knew a thing about you. I have no clue to your past Robin. I don't know what kind of man you were in your life before meeting us. But to me,

that doesn't matter."

"It doesn't?" Robin asked, baffled. "Chrom, I honestly don't even know what you see in me. True, I helped to save a village, but that was about it. I helped fight the Risen, but at the cost of loosing control of myself and nearly killing some of you."

Trailing off, Robin thought back to the last conversation that he had with Chrom back in the streets of Ylisstol.

"You said that you felt something about me...that you knew that we were destined to become friends. What did you mean by that?"

"I...I don't even know myself if we're being honest." Chrom said, still looking Robin in the eye.

"Just call it a really powerful hunch or something."

"No Chrom, I think it's more than that." Robin said.

"What do you mean?"

"There's something...binding us. Something drawing us together. You can't see it, but it's there. I felt something, back at the barracks, when I was meeting the rest of the Shepherds. I felt as if this is where I belong. I felt a bond with you all, even with barely knowing you. It's strange. But it's powerful...more powerful than any sword of spell. It's like there are...invisible ties drawing us together and keeping us close. Like a family. And thanks to you, I feel like I'm a part of that family. And I think that's our greatest strength. That's why we were able to beat the Risen back in the forest. Besides the fact of my outburst of course. Those creatures were powerful, more powerful than us even. But we prevailed because of teamwork. Because we used strengths to compensate for each other's weaknesses."

"Hmm..." Chrom said, listening intently to what Robin was saying.

"I saw the same thing today at the blocked passage." Robin continued. "Those Risen outnumbered you guys, and yet you prevailed. I watched at how you all worked as a team to win. Unlike the Risen who mindlessly attacked at their own will and did their own thing. You and the Shepherds used the bonds you formed to help combat your foe. For example, you and Vaike fought out there side by side as if it was a competition to see who could outdo the other. If I didn't know better, I would say that you two are long time rivals."

"Heh, it's funny you say that. For in fact Vaike and I ARE rivals." Chrom said with a laugh. "Although Vaike is far more adamant about it than I am."

"See? Exactly." Robin said, making his point. "it was by you and Vaike's friendship and rivalry that you were able to do so well out there. It's because you are family."

"You make a good point Robin." Chrom said, getting serious again. "...Maybe that's it Robin. Maybe the strange bond I felt with you was that you felt just like any other Shepherd. I saw you as anyone else, like Vaike, or Frederick, or Stahl. You felt like a part of the family."

"Chrom I'm...I'm truly flattered." Robin said with a smile. "Maybe I can gain the same bonds that you have formed with the other Shepherds."

"Heh, I don't see why not. You're one of us now Robin." Chrom said. "Get to know your comrades. Apply what you just told me. Make friends and use those friendships to help you along. You may be right, and these 'invisible ties' might just be are our greatest strength."

Taking a breath, Chrom lightened up a little. "Although, you can never go wrong with a trusty sword."

The two men laughed, and after calming down, Chrom got up from the campfire.

"It seems Frederick is back with dinner." Chrom said, looking at the fresh meat that Frederick was carrying that he no doubt hunted. "I'm going to go help him cook it out here. You want to join us?"

"No, that's ok. I'm going to head to my tent now."Robin said, while standing up.

"Ah, ok then. Don't forget to thank Virion for putting your tent up for you while you were gone getting firewood."

"Virion did that for me?" Robin asked, somewhat shocked.

"Yeah. What, did you think he would only do things like that for the ladies?"

"Actually...yes." Robin said honestly as he started walking towards his tent.

I guess there's still a lot of learn about the Shepherds after all.

Walking up to his tent, Robin was surprised to see that his tent was already furnished as well; having a rolled out bed at the far end of it with a candle beside it, and a small desk with another lit candle on top of it and with two chairs on opposite ends of it facing towards the tent's flap.

Wow, that's so nice of Stahl and the rest of the Shepherds.

Robin took off his coat and took out his sword and tome from it, and laid them to one side. He then neatly folded his coat and laid it next to his bed.

It's still only the evening...what to do now... Maybe I could work on some strategies. But how...

All of a sudden, an idea hatched in Robin's mind, and he walked out of the tent in search for Stahl.

Stahl was still setting out the last of the furniture for the tents as Robin walked up to him.

"Hey Stahl," Robin greeted with a smile.

"Oh, hello Robin. What can I do for you?" Stahl said, returning a smile.

"Well, first I wanted to thank you for setting out my furniture," Robin said.

"Oh, well I can't take the credit for that one," Stahl said honestly. "See, you were going to be one of the last people on my list to set out the furniture for, but Virion walked up to me and told me to give him the stuff for your tent. He set it all up himself."

"Wait what? Virion did that too?" Robin asked in disbelief.

"Too?" Stahl asked.

"Yeah, he also made my tent for me," Robin said. "I have no clue why."

"Wow, that's mighty nice of him. He must really like you or something."

"I wouldn't know why. All I've done is get mad it him."

"Oh well. Virion can be quite the unpredictable fellow sometimes," Stahl said. "In any case, is there anything else you need?"

"As a matter of fact yes," Robin said. "Do you happen to have any extra desks?"

"In fact I do," Stahl said. "I've got this one right here. it was supposed to be Frederick's, but he was adamant about not wanting it, and assured me that just the bed was good enough. If you don't mind me asking, what do you need it for?"

"I want to make a sort of a chess board." Robin said.

"Chess board? Why didn't you say so?" Stahl asked excitedly. "I have one right over here, pieces and all."

"Really?" Robin asked stunned.

"Yeah, I carry it around with me wherever I go," Stahl explained. "I usually keep it in a side pocket on my horse's saddle. The chess board was a gift from my father."

"Oh..." Robin said. "If you don't want to give it up, I completely understand. I didn't know that it was from your father."

"Oh, it's quite all right Robin," Stahl said. "just be sure to return it once we march again tomorrow. I'll let you borrow it whenever we set up camp."

"Thanks Stahl," Robin said happily as Stahl went in his tent to get the chess board. "You're a real friend."

"It's no trouble at all," Stahl said. "I love helping people out. Anyway, here you go. I'll see you in the morning Robin."

Taking the board from Stahl, Robin thanked the man again and walked off back to his tent.

Once inside, Robin laid the board on his desk and found that it was a fold out chess board. After opening it, Robin found the pieces inside. The two sets of pieces were black and white, and Robin spread out the pieces to their according color.

Now, how am I going to get these pieces to represent the Shepherds?

Robin's train of thought was interrupted as Virion unexpectedly opened Robin's tent flap.

"Greetings Robin," Virion began as he casually walked over to where Robin was sitting.

"Ah, Virion. I was actually going to come see you in a few minutes." Robin said, as he held out a hand, beckoning the man to the chair opposite of him. "Please, sit down."

"Ah, and what do we have here?" Virion asked as he sat down and studied the chess board on the table.

"It's a chess board from Stahl," Robin said. "I was thinking about how to use it to study strategy."

"Oh ho!" Virion said happily. "Chess is truly the thinking man's game and always great fun."

"You play?" Robin asked.

"That I do good sir," Virion said. "It was a common enough practice from where I'm from."

"You're not from Ylisse?" Robin asked.

"No, I hail from a land known as Rosanne, a place across an entire ocean from here. Although, my origins are of no concern."

"Fair enough, I won't pry." Robin said. "Hey, I wanted to thank you by the way."

"Ah, and for what would that be?" Virion inquired.

"You know what. This!" Robin said, gesturing around his tent. "You set up my tent for me as well as furnished it. Why did you do that for me?"

"Well I...I thought it would be the noble thing to do to make a newcomer to the shepherds feel welcome. Especially since you are our official tactician."

"Oh come on Virion, spare me the noble crap. What was the REAL reason?"

"My, aren't we plainspoken." Virion said, straightening himself. "Very well. It was my way to apologize."

"Apologize? For what?" Robin asked.

"For back at the forest where we first met...well, met from a distance. My passion for pursuing the fairer sex got in the way of my more important duty of protecting my friends and comrades. That is a mistake I shall not repeat."

"I suppose the apologizing should go both ways on that matter." Robin said solemnly. "I'm sorry for getting so mad at you. ...so mad in fact that it caused me to go into uber raged maniac mode."

"Your anger was understandable. I was the one at fault. That is what I came in here to tell you. I promise not to falter in such an out of character way again."

"Wait, so you're saying that you flirting with women is out of character for you? I'm calling major bullcrap."

"Ah, but there is where your naivete is showing. Socializing with women is not ALL I do."

"Alright, then what else DO you do then Virion?" Robin asked.

"Well, I do things like...like this." Virion said while gesturing to the chess board in front of him. "You said you wanted to practice strategy Robin. Then practice on me. Permit me to be your opponent."

"Are you sure?" Robin asked. "I won't go easy on you."

"Nor I you Robin. I shall strike with the nobility of a lion and defend with the grace of a swan!"

"Err...because swans are...good defenders I guess? In any case, bring it on Virion. We play the best of three rounds, agreed?"

"Oh agreed and agreed again sir Robin. Oh what fun this shall be! By all means, after you."

Maribelle strode in proudly through the streets of Ylisstol as the messenger guided her to the capitol. Even in the fading sunlight, Maribelle was still a standout with her finely primed hair and clothing befitting royalty.

The messenger bowed and bided Maribelle a good day as she walked up to the throne room within the capitol's chambers. Emmeryn was seated upon the throne of the exalt and had a friendly, yet serious look to her as Maribelle walked up to greet her.

"Good evening Maribelle," Emmeryn said in a kind and compassionate voice. "I hope your journey back to Ylisstol went well."

"It did your grace," Maribelle said as curt and politely as possible. "Whatever is the reason for me being here?"

Emmeryn's smile went stale as she began speaking.

"I shall get right to the point on this matter," Emmeryn started as she took a breath before speaking again.

"We found him..."

Eyes going wide, Maribelle froze up slightly as the realization of who Emmeryn was referring to sunk in.

"You don't mean...?"

"Yes," Emmeryn said, confirming Maribelle's suspicions.

"He's been finally caught and locked up in one of Ylisstol's local prison cells. Come, I will lead you to him."

Following Emmeryn through a seldom walked part of the city, Maribelle sheepishly spoke up.

"How were you able to catch him?"

"He was in the local streets trying to rob from Ylisstol's famous candy store," Emmeryn explained. "It was a bold move indeed, but it didn't pay off in the end, as our guards apprehended him and locked up in...ah here we are."

Emmeryn gestured to a small run down building away from any of Ylisstol's other major sites. It was made from worn gray bricks with old black paint running down from the sides. Emmeryn opened up the front entrance door and led Maribelle inside to a dark and moldy jail. There were four cells along the back wall; each with worn out metal bars protecting their entrances. The two cells to the left were empty, the one second to the right had an old man with long gray hair seated on a moldy cot in the back of his cell. The man laid motionless as Emmeryn and Maribelle walked past his cell. Emmeryn led Maribelle to the far right cell where the man she was looking for was being held.

"I'll head back to the capitol building," Emmeryn said in a quiet voice. "I'll leave you two alone here. You can come back to meet me if you wish once you're finished."

"Thank you milady." Maribelle replied as Emmeryn left the building.

Maribelle expression turned to stone as she peered into the dark cell and watched as the man whom she had been hunting for all this time walked up to the the metal bars to face Maribelle. The man was ragged; wearing a brown worn out prison garment with sticky globs of candies of various colors plastered all over it. The man's bright orange hair was messy and tangled and the man's eyes drooped as he saw who had come to greet him.

"Gaius..." Maribelle sneered, staring down the man harshly.

"Hey Twinkles..." Gaius muttered out in response.

"Don't call me by that ridiculous nickname!" Maribelle yelled. "You have no right to even be BREATHING as far as I'm concerned. But I suppose this will have to do. Look at your pitiful self. You're a wreck. And rightly so."

"Maybe I do deserve this for what I've done..." Gaius lamented. "But maybe it doesn't have to be like this. I know you hate me, put I've done my best to put my past behind me. I'm willing to atone for what I've done, If you'll just give me a chance, I'll-"

"You'll WHAT Gaius?!" Maribelle yelled, cutting the man off. "Steal from my poor family for the THIRD time?! And it wasn't just the money. On top of that you blamed my father for what you did. ...MY poor, innocent father..."

Maribelle paused as she started to get misty eyed.

"He was put in front of the magistrate and was almost put to death because of you!"

"Well, actually, the thing about that is..."

"NO! I don't want to hear it!" Maribelle screamed, cutting Gaius off again as tears started rolling down her cheeks. "All you've done is brought pain and disgrace to my family, and it serves you right to be locked up in here. I will see to it personally that you spend as much time as the magistrate will allow."

"No need to worry about that Maribelle..." Gaius said, hanging his head low. "The magistrate has looked into all of my past deeds as well. It seems that karma has finally caught up with me. The magistrate is considering the death sentence..."

"Well...well...GOOD!" Maribelle yelled. "Then true justice will be served for all the other poor and miserable wretches that you've brought suffering to!"

Getting emotional, Maribelle backed away from Gaius's cell, and opted to leave the man to his decay. Turning back around one last time, Maribelle spat, "Damn you Gaius...damn you."

"Checkmate my good sir!" Virion exclaimed with pride as he toppled over Robin's king with his queen.

"Blast it all!" Robin said, throwing his hands up in the air. "How did you even do that?"

"I told you before we began that I would attack like the lion and defend like the swan did I not?"

"Yeah yeah, whatever. I hate to admit it Virion, but I am utterly beaten. ...Although your tactics for beating me were less than 'noble'."

"You wound me Robin," Virion said, taken back. "All of my moves were fair play."

" 'fair play' my arse! But in any case, I enjoyed the challenge Virion. You do have quite the talent for strategy. Maybe there's more to you than I originally thought."

"My qualities are as much board as they are fine." Virion said with a grin.

"...Then your qualities must not be very board then." Robin retorted sarcastically. "But anyway, I would love for this to become a regular thing. Would you mind if you stopped by more often to play me some more rounds?"

"If you want me to unleash my 'dishonorable' strategies upon you again, you need but ask Robin." Virion said as he got up from his chair. "Good night Robin."

"Night Virion." Robin waved as Virion left his tent.

"Wow, it's pretty late." Robin said to himself as he stared up into the night sky.

"Well, maybe I can look more into my magic problem." Robin said as he looked over to his lightning tome next to his bed.

Picking up the tome, Robin quickly flipped through it and tried to recall some of the spells inside.

"Let's see...I know basic Thunder. Let's take baby steps with this. Elthunder seems to be the next one up. I'll try practicing that one tomorrow if I have any...spare...time..."

All of a sudden a sharp pain shot straight into Robin's head, and Robin kneeled down in agony as the accursed voice that he had heard several times before spoke to him.

HAHAHA...you're that eager to kill your so called 'friends' Robin?

Damn, not you again... What do you want?!

Only to inform you that a repeat of what happened yesterday could happen again if you let it.

Wait...so that outburst I had...it was YOU!

HAHAHA, that is where you are wrong Robin. I'M not the one who got mad and went into a rage.

True, but you must be the one who caused that massive lightning bolt...you must be able to control me through magic.

I can control you no matter what you do, fool boy. Magic just makes it easier. And that magical outburst was indeed caused by Robin.

Oh, so you want to address me in the third person now huh? You filthy liar.

I am not lying. Robin caused that attack.

I don't believe you. I can control you, not the other way around. I can...force you..out of my...mind...

HAHAHA, struggle all you want Robin. It won't change your destiny. You may silence me for now, but you won't shut me out. I'll always be there...watching.

No...get...out...

Robin nearly toppled to the ground as he slowly regained control of his body.

*Who the hell IS that guy? Well, in any case, at least I know what caused that scene yesterday. Maybe if I harden myself enough, that stupid voice will go away. Although, I won't go back into ma*gic just yet. I'll try again tomorrow.

At that, Robin fell onto his bed and fell to sleep without nary another thought.

The Shepherds packed camp and moved out at the break of dawn. Within just two hours march, the task force arrived at the gates of Regna Ferox. The cold weather and snow had picked up considerably, and the area surrounding the castle was covered in a foot of white snow. Lissa snuggled up to Frederick's horse for warmth and Robin hugged his coat tightly as he trudged through the snow and ice with Chrom at his side.

"W-why does it have to be so c-cold?" Robin complained, putting the cowl of his coat over his head. "How can anyone even l-l-live up h-here?"

"The Feroxi are a strong warrior like people," Chrom explained, seemingly unphased by the cold.

"They can handle even the most extreme of weather conditions."

"Well, if they are such proud warriors, what makes you think they won't great us with hostility?"

"Like I explained back at the barracks, Ylisse and Ferox have a good relationship with each other. I think all it will take is some old fashioned diplomacy. It's not my strong suit, but I'll give it a shot."

Walking up to the entrance gates, a woman with short blonde hair and wearing heavy armor addressed the Shepherds from upon a barricade above the gates of Regna Ferox.

"Halt!" the woman ordered as Chrom and Robin stopped to look up at her. "Who goes there?"

"I am Chrom, prince of Ylisse, asking for passage into Regna Ferox to meet with your Khan for important business.

"Hah! You think me a fool, so called 'Prince of Ylisse'?" the woman sneered. "I know better than to trust the words of some mindless brigand and his little group and let you just waltz on into Regna Ferox."

"B-brigand?!" Robin stepped up to defend Chrom. "Do you even have EYES lady?! This is royalty you're speaking to! Show some respect!"

"The only RESPECT I give is to those who prove themselves in battle!" The woman taunted. "And who do you think YOU are to give ME orders?"

"I am Robin, tactician of the Shepherds!" Robin announced boldly. "And we came here on the notion that we could have an agreement with your people peacefully."

"Like I said, the only acknowledgement I'll grant you is on the field of battle. If who you say you are is true, then prove it in battle!"

"Oh yeah? You and what army?" Robin taunted back.

"This one." The woman said coldly as a group of spearman and armored guards walked up beside her.

Welp, that's what my big mouth gets me...

"Stop!" Chrom commanded. "It doesn't have to be like this! We can find a peaceful solution!"

Ignoring Chrom's plea, the woman ordered the spearman to train their spears on Chrom.

"Ready..." the woman gave her mark, pointing at Chrom.

No, Chrom! Get out of the way!

"Fire!" the woman yelled, and at that a stream of spears zoomed from the barricade straight down at Chrom.

Robin quickly reacted and ran to push Chrom out of the way to take the spears himself. The moment he did so however, Robin felt a sudden rush of air come up from underneath him and in a flash Robin was in the air hovering over the gates of Regna Ferox.

"What the..." Robin managed to get out as he got his bearings before realizing that he was on the back of a pegasus.

"S-Sumia?!" Robin exclaimed, as he saw who was flying the pegasus in front of him.

Looking back at him, Sumia gave Robin a friendly smile.

"Hold on tight Robin. I don't know how acquainted you are with flying."

"I'm not acquainted with flying at all..." Robin said as he looked down in horror at just how high in the air he was.

Oh Gods help me! This is nerve wracking!

Doing his best to focus himself, Robin scanned the battlefield below him. Chrom and Frederick had already made a push to a stairway leading up to the barricade on the side of the gate. Virion and Miriel stayed put where they were and fired off arrows and fireballs up to the spearman who were trying their best to stop Chrom's advance. Robin then noticed an access point, near where the armored woman from before was standing. Her flank was exposed from behind.

This gives me an idea...I very stupid idea...

"Sumia, drop me down there!" Robin ordered as he pointed right behind where the chief guard was standing.

"Are you sure about that?" Sumia asked in concern.

"Nope. But I'm doing it anyway."

"Well, good luck then." Sumia said as she flew down near the armored woman's position.

Robin quickly unsheathed his sword from his coat pocket and without warning, jumped off from the back of Sumia's pegasus while swinging down his sword with both hands as he plummeted right on top of the female guard.

"You're finished!" Robin yelled as his sword pierced through the woman's armor and knocked her off balance.

Robin yelled in pain as he lost his footing on the drop and fell down onto the cold ground. Robin had hit the woman's abdomen, and she grit her teeth in pain as blood trickled down her gray armor from the slice mark.

Robin did his best to get back on his feet, but the woman reacted quicker as she picked up a spear from a fallen guard and threw it at Robin. Robin quickly ducked and barely dodged the projectile.

The woman then picked up a close combat lance and charged straight at Robin with all her remaining strength.

Oh Gods, this is it...

Out of nowhere however, Chrom rushed into the woman's side with the broad side of his sword, making the woman tumble to the ground. Frederick quickly caught up behind Chrom, holding out his silver lance to the fallen woman's throat as she tried to get back up.

"So then your claims were true..." the woman said in awe at how quickly she had been bested.

Frederick allowed her to get up as she called out to the remaining border guards, telling them to stand down.

"My apologies...Prince Chrom." the woman said with a nod as she dropped her weapon.

"So will we be able to see the Khan then?" Chrom asked as he put away his sword.

"Indeed, I'll show you in myself." the woman said as she began walking down to the gate entrance.

"Wow..."Robin said as he, Chrom, and Frederick followed the woman to the gate. "She just completely changed once we defeated her. I guess the sword does speak louder than words with these people."

"I should have known better than to think diplomacy would work." Chrom said, laughing at himself. "But holy crap though Robin, did I see you jump off a pegasus back there?!"

"Yep." Robin said plainly. "Don't ask me why I did it, it just seemed to be the best thing to do at that moment. Adrenaline will do that to people."

"Yeah I guess so..." Chrom said as he stared at Robin.

"I'm more surprised that Sumia was able to rescue me when she did." Robin admitted. "Talk about perfect timing."

"Yeah, that sure was something..." Chrom said as he looked to see where Sumia had went.

The girl had landed her pegasus a little ways back from the gate, and she was dismounting it as Chrom waved to her.

Sumia quickly ran up to the trio, but out of nowhere, she tripped on nothing and fell face first into the snow as she neared Chrom.

"Those boots of yours again?" Chrom said with a laugh as Sumia got up and brushed herself off.

"Yes! I mean no! I mean...nevermind." Sumia sighed.

"Well, anyway that was a crazy stunt you pulled, saving Robin like that." Chrom said with a smile.

"Oh it was no trouble at all. That pegasus is such a darling."

"Wow, it's crazy that you were able to train her so fast." Chrom said. "Just yesterday, she looked as if she was going to kill one of us."

"Oh no, that cutie pie is so nice and friendly...once you really get to know her."

"Well, in any case," Chrom said. "You have my thanks Sumia."

"That goes doubly for me!" Robin said with a laugh.

Author's Note

Alright! Another chapter finished! I know not a whole lot happened this chapter story wise, but I want to make sure to take things nice and slow with mixing in a lot of character interactions and side activities. I'm pretty happy with Robin's character for this chapter. Tell me if I should keep it or not.

Hopefully the Maribelle scene wasn't too far fetched. Don't worry that wasn't just a random side thing, I'm going to build off of that. I thought that the MaribellexGaius support conversation was very touching and well done, so I couldn't help but translate it into my story.

Yay! More Marth stuff coming up for the next chapter. I can't wait. Until then, as always, Nagaspeed!

Chapter 7: Chapter 7

Author's Note

Chapter 7 guys! Woot! So much awesome stuff happening right now. First with comic-con (which just goes without saying), plus cover art and new goodies are being released for the new super smash bros.

On a movie note: there's so many awesome movies out now like Dawn of the Planet of the Apes, as well as OMG Guardians of the Galaxy! Both are such awesome movies.

And good stuff also in music as well. The second single for Maroon 5's new album has been released and Linkin Park's new music video for their single *Final Masquerade* just went up on Youtube today. (when I first typed this, that is).

But anyway, not to sound like a advertisement here, but I couldn't help from talking about what an awesome summer this has been in all aspects. But that's not why you're here is it? You're here for more Fire Emblem stuff! YAY!

As always, I take what you guys tell me to heart, and I've been reading various comments/concerns/requests etc. And I shall do my best to incorporate all of them into *Robin's Journey*. This will be a somewhat short chapter (no where NEAR as short as chapter 1 mind you, but still not as long as say ch.5 and ch.6.), but I'm gonna try to move the story along for now, and wait until things cool down a little bit story wise until I throw in some more character supports and other side stuff like that. Welp, here we go!

Following the woman who they learned was called Raimi, Chrom, Robin, and Frederick was shown into the central halls of the castle of Regna Ferox, and was then shown into the throne room where Raimi came to a halt.

"Prince Chrom of Ylisse," Raimi began, standing in a firm posture as to salute Chrom's position as Prince. "Remain here, I shall summon the Khan."

Chrom nodded in affirmation, and with that, Raimi walked off to a door leading to a different chamber of the castle, leaving the three Shepherds to themselves.

"Hmm..." Robin began, breaking the somewhat uneasy silence between the three men. "I'm surprised that the Khan isn't here in the throne room."

"The Khan is a very busy man Robin," Chrom replied, scanning the open room, and admiring the foreign decor, which included a purple carpeted walkway which he and the Shepherds were standing on.

"I'm frankly surprised that the Khan has any time to see us at all."

"The Khan might be out training," Frederick cut in. "As we've previously witnessed, the people of Ferox prefer battle to politics and parleys. In fact, battle might just BE their politics."

"Heh, so the Khan's a warrior ruler eh?" Robin mused. "I bet I can picture him now...a big man...like Frederick and Vaike combined. With maybe a big bushy beard to complete the look. And a broad and bare chest to show off to all the world."

"Is that so? Oh please, do go on." a surprisingly feminine voice called out.

All three of the Shepherds jerked around at once to see a woman walk up to to them with a broad and confident smile on her face.

The woman wore bright gray and red armor which covered most all of her body, with a red shield attached to her right arm for protection. She had light brown skin and blonde hair which the woman wore up, no doubt so it wouldn't get in the way during combat.

The woman laughed heartily at the shocked look upon the Shepherds faces, and Raimi smirked as she walked up beside the woman.

"You're the...er...the Khan I presume?" Chrom asked, still in shock at the Khan's gender.

"I'm one of the Khans, yes," the woman said, somewhat straightening her composure. "My name is Flavia."

Turning to face Robin, Flavia added, "Oh and I'm sorry if my appearance isn't what you expected. Next time I'll be 'bare chested and show it off to the world'." Flavia said with a smirk.

"That...er...won't be necessary...your highness." Robin managed to get out as he started blushing heavily.

Gods, why is it that half the things I say turn around to bite me in the butt?

Getting serious again, Flavia turned back to Chrom saying, "I apologize for the trouble you had at the border Prince Chrom. You are always welcome in Regna Ferox."

"Thank you Khan Flavia," Chrom said while nodding politely. "I'm sure that we can put that little misunderstanding behind us."

Eyeing Raimi, Chrom added, "Your border guards initially accused us as being bandits who were pretending to be Ylissean. Have bandits truly been ransacking your border villages while posing to be Ylissean?"

"Yes. Those Plegian dogs!" Flavia somewhat yelled. "Many good lives have been lost because of them. And as proof of who had done it, we had found documents proving the bandits to be Plegian from one of their fallen captains. It seems Plegia must see some benefit in raising tension between your kingdom and ours."

"Damn them!" Chrom blurted out before catching himself. Recomposuring himself, Chrom said, "I apologize Khan Flavia, that was...indelicately put."

"Hah! Damn them and damn delicacy! Us people of Ferox appreciate plain speech Prince Chrom."

Looking over at Raimi again, Chrom said, "Well in that case, maybe you should have a word with your damn border guards..."

Raimi rolled her eyes at Chrom's statement, and Flavia burst out laughing.

"Haha! See, Prince Chrom? Sometimes its speaking frank that gets you places. I think I like you already."

Again regaining her composure, Flavia said, "I know why you're here Prince Chrom. But I'm afraid to say that I can offer you no troops for Ylisse."

"What? But why?" Robin interjected.

"Because I lack the authority to do so."

"Wait, what do you mean you lack the authority?" Chrom asked. "Aren't you the Khan?"

"Like I said, I am ONE of the Khans." Flavia explained. "In Ferox, the Khans from the east and west of Ferox hold a tournament every several years. The victor of the tournament gets total sovereignty over both sub-kingdoms. And that means that they have the final say when it comes to forging alliances and declaring wars and such. I am the East-Khan, and the West-Kahn won the last tournament you see, so..."

Cutting Flavia off, Chrom asked, "So there's nothing we can do?"

"If you always give up THAT easy there isn't." Flavia huffed. "The next tournament is today believe it or not, and I am in need of a champion. I was going to use Raimi as a last resort, but I know she wouldn't last that long in that clanking armor of hers. ...No offense Raimi."

"None taken your Grace." Raimi said while bowing her head respectively.

"Ok...but what does that have to do with us?" Chrom asked.

"From what Raimi told me what happened back there, I surmise that you yourself are quite capable Prince Chrom. You as well...er...Robin was it?"

"Yes, I am Robin your Grace." Robin nodded.

"Perhaps one of you would be interested in representing the East-Khan in the tournament? If you were to win and I were to become ruling Khan, I would grant your alliance."

"Huh. I would have thought that Ylisseans had no place in Feroxi traditions." Chrom said.

"Oh, quite the opposite Prince Chrom." Flavia said with a smile. "We Khans ourselves do not fight in the tournaments - we choose champions to represent us. Otherwise, our land would to rife with blood feuds and dead Khans! And we also don't involve comrades or kin for the same reason. Over time, it was decided that the tournaments would primarily be

fought by outsiders. Although none of said outsiders have ever been foreign royalty. ...At least, not that I know of! Ha! Well regardless, the choice is up to you."

"Choice is out of the question," Chrom said seriously. "Our people are desperate for aid. We face not only the Plegians and their bandit raids, but also now the threat of the Risen. If fighting for you is the quickest way to an alliance, then so be it."

"Nicely put," Flavia said in admiration. "I truly hope no harm befalls you during the tournament... that is of course if YOU are the one to become my champion Prince Chrom."

"Do you have any objections Robin?" Chrom asked.

"No, of course not." Robin said.

"Very well then, I accept!"

"Then it's settled!" Flavia said happily. "Come, and I'll show you where the tournament is held. But be wary Prince Chrom...I hear the West-Khan has quite the swordsman representing them this time around."

"No matter. He shall be defeated, plain and simple." Chrom said flatly.

"Ha! Well spoken again Prince Chrom. I hope you're as equally skilled with a blade as you are your tongue. Here, this way."

As Flavia led Chrom away, Raimi walked up to Robin and Frederick.

"We shall gather you and the rest of your army together, and I will escort you to the stands where you can watch the tournament."

"Very well," Frederick said sternly. "Lead on!"

Heh, I hope we get good seats...

Flocks of birds chirped through the busy streets of Ylisstol as dawn broke over the capitol. Maribelle started her day by meeting Emmeryn again in the capitol building to discuss her new assignment.

"Good day Maribelle." Emmeryn greeted the well-to-do woman in her usual compassionate manner.

"I am humbled in your presence milady," Maribelle began as she returned Emmeryn's friendly smile and bowed respectively. "In what manner may I now serve the citizens of Ylisse?"

"Not so much 'citizens' as much villagers." Emmeryn explained. "There is a small Ylissean village in the far outskirts of our territory near the Plegian border. I've been there once myself. It has good, kindhearted people there."

Hardening herself, Emmeryn continued on. "Very recently, that village has been raided by Plegian bandits. It's unsurprising considering how close the village is to the border, but nonetheless there are many injured and helpless people there who need immediate care."

"I see..." Maribelle said as Emmeryn explained the situation.

"You are one of the best healers among the Shepherds Maribelle. I know it is a dangerous thing for me to ask of you to go so close to the border. But if we wait for the rest of the Shepherds to return from Regna Ferox, many more innocents could die in the process. However, I won't force you to do this Maribelle. The choice is yours."

"Milady..." Maribelle trailed off, lost in heavy thought. "I'll do it! If I can prevent the needless deaths of more innocent commoners, then I shall gladly do my part!"

"Thank you Maribelle," Emmeryn said kindly. "Ylisse is in your debt. I bid you safe travels Maribelle."

Staring off for a moment, Emmeryn spoke again as Maribelle started walking out of the throne room.

"Oh, and Maribelle..." Emmeryn began.

Turning around, Maribelle asked, "Yes milady?"

"...Say hello to Timothy for me." Emmeryn said as her eyes went blank; lost in deep meditation.

Slightly confused as to who this 'Timothy' was, Maribelle nodded and respectively left the throne room. Once she reached the barracks, Maribelle promptly saddled her horse and packed her healing staffs for the long ride to the border.

Chrom's face turned to hardened steel as the south gate opened for him to walk out into the arena. Flavia and Raimi stood behind him and Flavia put a hand on Chrom's armored right shoulder to stop him from entering just yet.

"Now, just to be clear," Flavia began. This is NOT a fight to the death. The victor is decided if he has achieved clear physical domination over his opponent or if the opponent shouts out that he forfeits. However, there have been deaths before in this tournament, so be sure to fight as if your life depends on it."

"And what if I do happen to kill my opponent?" Chrom asked seriously.

"You will not be penalized, but you'll really piss off the West Khan, and believe me when I say you DON'T want that."

"Understood..." Chrom said as he stared out to the large, circular arena floor in front of him."

"Now..." Flavia said, lightening up a little. "Go show us what you're made of!"

At that, Chrom walked forward out onto the arena as the southern gate behind him closed. Chrom scanned around the indoor arena, taking in the view.

The whole building was a great coliseum, and as far as Chrom could tell, the whole building was devoted to the arena. The whole place was made from stone, and large lit torches were placed on all four corners of the arena.

Above a large stone barricade were the stands which reached up almost to the ceiling. Chrom was in awe as he looked around at the spectators; all cheering and shouting, although Chrom couldn't make out if they were cheering for him or not. But there was so many of them; possibly in the thousands, swarms of spectators from all over the land all shouting down below for the fighting to commence.

"Ugh...I really do hate the spotlight..." Chrom muttered to himself as he walked on nearer to the center of the arena.

Robin and the rest of the Shepherds were given "V.I.P." seats in the low center of the stands to get a good view of the action. Robin sat in the middle of the second to the last row of seats above the stone barricade with Lissa to his left and Frederick to his right. To Frederick's left was Sully and above her was Virion who had apparently decided to move on from her and try Miriel instead who was sitting beside him. Of course however, Virion was making little progress. To the other side of Miriel was Stahl, who was biting off an apple which Robin guessed was like the one he had eaten back in Ylisstol. Next to Stahl was Sumia, who was plucking off the petals of a dandelion and muttering Chrom's name in a soft voice every few seconds. And finally there was Vaike, who was walking around the stands and showing off his axe and muscles to complete strangers who were getting quite irritated with the man. After receiving much yelling and several choice words, Vaike finally decided to take a seat next to Sumia muttering how "the world wasn't ready for The Vaike quite yet.".

Lissa was going pale watching her older brother out there in the arena, waiting to face whoever came to challenge him. Robin noticed sweat rolling down from the side of her face. Hesitantly, Robin put his arm around Lissa's shoulder and said, "Hey, everything's going to be fine. You should be more worried about Chrom's opponent than Chrom. Haha!"

"I AM worried about Chrom's opponent Robin!" Lissa protested, as she wailed but to Robin's surprise, let him keep his arm around her shoulder which got a raised eyebrow from Frederick.

"What if he's the biggest, meanest creep to ever exist and Chrom can't beat him?!"

"Well...that's not exactly what I meant..." Robin said, deciding to pull his arm away as he noticed Frederick's glance from his peripheral vision.

"Oh Chrom, please be okay..." Lissa practically sobbed as she buried her face in her arms in stressful anticipation.

Turning over to Frederick, Robin said, "I'm surprised you didn't raise any objections to not being able to protect Chrom in the arena."

"I have faith in milord," Frederick said plainly. "He is far more powerful than I; no one opponent can defeat him in a straight fight."

Chrom's more powerful than Frederick? Robin thought to himself in a shocked manner at Frederick's statement.

But I've seen Frederick single-handedly mow down waves of both bandits and Risen. And I've yet to see Chrom perform the same feats. Maybe there is a lot about Chrom that I am yet to know...

Robin was shook from his thoughts when Lissa stood up from her seat and practically shouted, "Guys! Look!"

Chrom put a hand on the hilt of his fabled sword Falchion as his opponent walked into the arena and the northern gate closed behind him. As the opponent neared the inner circle of the arena, more lighting beamed onto him and Chrom immediately double taked at who his challenger was.

"M-Marth..." Chrom said in disbelief as the masked swordsman walked up nearer to him to face him down.

The crowds above the two duelists roared as Marth made his entrance.

Oh my Gods that's Marth... Robin thought to himself over the deafening roar of the crowds of spectators surrounding him. Every one of the Shepherds had eyes now locked on Chrom and Marth, and Lissa had both hands over her mouth to stifle her screams and shouts. Virion had stopped his "conversation" with Miriel and had grown deathly serious as he watched the duelists below. Vaike also watched intently, but with a look of what Robin guessed to be envy on his face. Frederick had the most serious face of all of them however as Robin noticed a drop of hot sweat roll down his face.

Wow, I thought sweating wasn't even humanly possible for Frederick.

Part of Robin wished that he was down there helping Chrom, but he knew that Chrom and the Shepherds would be disqualified if he did so.

You got this Chrom... Robin thought nervously. *I hope...*

Chrom's eyes widened as Marth drew his sword; a sword that looked shockingly similar to Chrom's Falchion.

"Where...where did you get that?" Chrom called out to Marth as he pointed his sword out at Chrom.

Chrom was further taken back as he studied Marth's sword more intently. Even the way the sword gleamed was identical to his own. Everything about Marth's sword was a perfect match to his own.

After not answering his question, Chrom continued, "There's no way that you wield Falchion. Yours must be fake!"

Standing there emotionless with his sword still pointed at Chrom, Marth replied, "As you are about to find out, it is not."

With that, Marth charged in, holding his sword down to the ground, causing sparks to fly from the tip of the sword as it tore against the ground. With blinding speed, Marth brought his sword up, but using keen reflexes, Chrom brought his sword up in time to parry the blow.

Chrom leaped back aways, and using almost unnatural human strength, he leaped into the air with Falchion above his head and plummeted at Marth's center, spinning his entire body in a circular motion in a show of mind-boggling force.

Instead of leaping back however, Marth choose to stand his ground and he brought his sword up to his chest in a defensive posture.

Crashing upon Marth with the force of a stallion, Chrom brought his sword down hard against Marth's. Somehow though, Marth was able to halt the force of the attack and both identical swords got locked in place and started grinding against each other.

Watching from above in the stands, Robin starting to cringe at the high-pitched sound of Marth and Chrom's swords grinding on each other.

Argh! ...It's almost as if it's unnatural for those swords to be locked in combat against each other. The sound...it's painful.

Robin looked around and noticed that other people were cringing or covering their ears as well to the awful sound of Marth and Chrom's swords clashing.

Chrom gritted his teeth over the sparks that were beginning to fly from his sword lock with Marth. Chrom couldn't help but be impressed however at Marth's fighting ability. Marth seemed to be equally matched against Chrom; even using similar fighting techniques and stances as him.

Pushing all of his might into his forearms, Marth pushed his sword up and broke the sword lock, causing Chrom to step

back a few feet.

Marth went on the offensive as he rushed in towards Chrom while swinging his sword in broad, powerful strokes. Chrom brought his sword up to block Marth's onslaught as he continued swinging and hitting Chrom's sword blow after blow, causing Chrom and continually step back in defense.

Gods...Marth is a beast... Robin thought in awe as Marth continued his assault without let-up.

Marth's barrage of swings finally paid off as the tip of his blade hit Chrom's bare left arm; tearing off a patch of flesh. Chrom cringed in pain and made a powerful broad stroke at Marth's sword. Marth didn't anticipate such a powerful swing, and he leaped back a few feet as he lost his momentum.

Chrom looked down at his wounded arm and watched as tiny stream of bright red blood flowed from out of the flesh wound. Looking up at Marth, Chrom stood up straight again and spat, "Who in the hell taught you to fight like that?!"

Chrom looked surprised as Marth looked somewhat shocked by his question. Chrom could tell that Marth was trying to hide what emotions he had underneath his mask.

Straightening himself in a battle stance, Marth shouted in response, "My father!"

Marth again went on the offensive, using a similar attack run as before. Anticipating that Marth would use the same fighting style again, Chrom was ready for him this time around. Chrom held his sword in a two-handed stance, and swung at Marth's right side which he had observed is undefended when Marth uses his offensive barrage.

Not expecting Chrom to quickly catch on to the counter of his attack, Marth instinctively brought his sword to meet Chrom's to parry his counter attack. Although Marth bested Chrom in terms of speed and technique, Chrom held the edge in might, and he used that to his advantage as he used all of the muscles in his arms to push up from Marth's sword block. Marth couldn't hold Chrom's might, and he brought his sword down from the parry and fell back to formulate a new attack plan.

The crowd's roars temporarily quieted as the two duelists took a quick breather from their impressive display of fighting. Chrom breathed in short, ragged breaths as he felt sweat pour down his face and some meld in with his navy blue hair. Chrom ignored the pain in his left arm, and was relieved that most of the bleeding had stopped. Chrom then stared back at Marth, who although noticeably exhausted as well, still kept his composure in tact and his mask firmly in place.

Deciding to take the moment to learn more about Marth, Chrom asked, "You say your father taught you how to fight as good as you do. Who exactly IS your father?"

Marth didn't answer, still keeping his concealed eyes locked on Chrom and remained emotionless.

"So that's how it's going to be huh?" Chrom asked in a irritated tone. Taking a breath, Chrom continued talking, but in a softer voice so that most of the audience above couldn't hear.

"Look, I owe you a debt. You helped save my friend and helped us to defeat those creatures that you call 'Risen'. You have my respect and thanks. But while I'm within these walls, I represent the interests of Ylisse and the Shepherds. This battle shall not end until one of us is defeated. But I vow on my life not to shame or bring unnecessary harm to you."

"Isn't that being a little presumptuous?" Marth asked with a dry laugh. "You haven't beaten me yet."

"You forgot to put emphasis on 'yet'." Chrom said confidently as he brought his sword to bear and decided to go on the offensive himself this time. Instead of using fast and precise strikes with Marth, Chrom used slower, broader, yet much more powerful strikes against Marth, who although could parry with ease, had a hard time holding a sword lock against Chrom's might.

Chrom swung again and again, each time ending with Marth's parry and more sparks flying from the tip of the two twin blades. Chrom started breathing heavy as he grew frustrated at how Marth kept blocking his attacks and remaining relatively unphased.

Chrom stepped back, and recuperated his stance as Marth prepared himself for Chrom to attack again.

"Damn...it's like he knows my every move before I even make them." Chrom said silently to himself. "That means I got to do something he doesn't expect..."

Out of nowhere, Chrom changed his attack stance completely; shifting to a forward thrusting stance, with both hands around his sword's hilt, and the tip of the blade facing directly towards Marth's face.

What's Chrom doing? Robin asked himself, noticing Chrom's unusual fighting stance from up above. Before Robin could think any more, Chrom suddenly rushed in with blinding speed, using all of his upper body strength to use his sword like a spear head, with the sword thrusting at Marth's head with superhuman force.

Just as Chrom had hoped, Marth was caught off guard at Chrom's sudden change of fighting styles and had no time to react and bring his sword up to parry the oncoming blow to the face. Using nothing but his impressive bodily reflexes, Marth turned his body to the side as fast as his instincts would let him, hoping that Chrom's blade would miss him completely.

Marth's heart stopped as time seemed to freeze as Chrom's blade made contact. Marth had turned himself just enough that the sword wouldn't hit a direct impact on his face. However, with mind boggling precision and luck, Marth's head instinctively tilted back sightly as the blade zoomed in to his eyes. Watching as if his life was flashing before his eyes, Marth watched in shock as the blade cut straight through Marth's mask; missing his eyes by mere millimeters. Marth stumbled back to the ground at the shock of the blade carving through his mask, and he watched in horror as his hair which his mask had held up flowed from the sides of his face as he tumbled to the ground.

Chrom's mind had a delayed reaction as he finished his thrust and noticed Marth's mask; cut cleanly in half by his blade. Gathering himself together, Chrom turned to face Marth, and his face turned to pure shock as he saw Marth's long blue hair flowing free around the fallen man. Chrom couldn't see Marth's face however since he was staring at the ground with his sword discarded to the side of him, and his hair flowing over his face.

"Wait...you can't be..." Chrom managed to speak as realization started to come over him. Marth slowly lifted up his face, and looked at Chrom straight in the eye, and Chrom gasped as his suspicion was confirmed.

The entire audience followed suit to Chrom and went completely silent as Marth stood up to face Chrom without his mask. No one in the audience was more shocked than the Shepherds, however, as Robin's mouth was wide open in disbelief.

Oh my Gods...is Marth seriously a...

"Marth...you're...you're a woman?!" Chrom blurted out in shock as Marth stared at him with her long navy blue hair flowing down her body beautifully.

For the first time, Marth's cold and expressionless face was shattered as she broke a smile and chuckled at a baffled Chrom.

"Yes...yes, I'm a woman." Marth said in a distinctively more feminine voice then before. "I'm actually surprised I was able to hold the ruse for as long as I did."

"But...but..." Chrom said, dumbfounded.

"I enjoyed our fight." Marth said with a respective nod. Growing more serious, she added, "It brought back fond memories..."

Marth then picked up her sword and thrusted it skyward into the air as she shouted out to everyone in the arena in a commanding voice, "I forfeit the tournament! I have been bested! Prince Chrom of Ylisse is your new Champion!"

Marth grew nervous as all the spectators were still deathly silent. All of them were still staring at her, all without a sound. A pin dropping to the ground could be heard since the arena was so silent.

Chrom walked into the center of the arena, and hoping to draw the attention off of Marth, he raised his sword high into the air with his good arm, indicating himself as the winner. The audience still remained motionless however.

Oh bugger it, go Chrom! Robin thought as he stood up from his seat and began clapping for Chrom's victory. Robin immediately regretting his decision however as no one followed suit and he was the only person making any noise in the entire arena. Just as Robin was about to stop for the sake of his dignity, Frederick stood up and joined in, clapping for Chrom.

Lissa was next, standing beside Robin and clapping as loud as she could. The rest of the Shepherds soon followed, Virion, Sully, Vaike, Sumia, and all the rest of Chrom's comrades all began clapping in unison. After a brief moment, some audience members near them finally decided to go along and began clapping as well. Those around them stood up and began clapping, and in a flash, a domino effect occurred and the entire coliseum was standing and clapping in great unison for Chrom. Many began cheering, and the whole place was abuzz with shouts and cries of happiness and respect.

Chrom took it all in and smiled happily to the crowd above him, and waved out to them in joy. Coming to his senses however, Chrom turned around to where Marth was, and saw her pick up her sword and walk out back towards her entrance gate with her head hung low.

"Marth..." Chrom called out softly as Flavia and some of her soldiers raced onto the arena from the southern gate to congratulate Chrom.

"Well kid, you put up a good fight," Basilio began as he walked with Marth to the gates of Regna Ferox. "But why in the hell didn't you tell me you were a lass?!"

"It wouldn't have made much difference." Marth said flatly as Basilio escorted her through the gates and to blistering cold of the outside.

"Maybe not, but I don't like people hiding things from me." Basilio snapped.

"My apologies Khan Basilio," Marth said in a friendly voice. "I promise not to trouble you any longer. I will be on my way now."

"No! Wait!" Basilio protested, holding Marth by the arm so she wouldn't walk away. "You don't have to leave. I may not have won, but you can still stay with us in Regna Ferox. I could use good fighters like you."

"I'm sorry, but I must depart." Marth said as she tore herself from Basilio's grasp and walked on into the snow and cold."

"Wait! Don't go!" Basilio called out before he could no longer see her through the waves of falling snow. "Damn..." Basilio cursed as he walked back inside the gates of the castle.

Marth trudged on through the snow before she made it to a clearing and found the open trail that lead off back to Ylisstol. Turning around to face Regna Ferox again, Marth said solemnly to herself, "Well, It seems that my mission here has failed. But not all is lost. I can come back for the gemstone another time. Besides, there are more important matters to attend to."

Marth turned back around and stared off into the distance to the open trail ahead with the sun shining brightly over it.

"Emmeryn..."

Author's Note

Man oh man do I hate writing battle scenes! It's so friggin' HARD! *ahem* Anyways, I'm glad that I got over this hurdle story-wise. I know this is one of the most memorable chapters from the game, so I was berating myself with every single sentence, trying to makes things as perfect as possible. So I'm sorry if the descriptions felt a little choppy. I'll continue to work and improve at writing battle sequences (trust me, I'm gonna get plenty of practice with this story.)

Also, more Maribelle exposition! Yay! I can't wait to start writing about Maribelle's little side adventure, so look forward to that next chapter.

And to address the elephant in the room: yes, 'Marth's' gender was revealed now instead of in chapter 6 of the in-game story. Why? Because I thought it would be more dramatic in this setting rather it being in right outside the capitol of Ylisse with only two people to see it. This way, I get to kill two birds with one stone with getting the gender reveal already out of the way and also having all the Shepherds see it, so Robin doesn't have to go around to all the Shepherds going, "Hey guess what? Marth's a girl!" *shivers*. Anyway, I know I'm throwing you guys off with stuff like that, but it's just too fun! Besides, reading is also more fun to the reader when you're not 100% on what's gonna happen next.

Well, anyway I'll try to pump out a couple more chapters before school starts again. (Oh God...SCHOOL! Naga give me strength...) So starting in late August, my update schedule (if that's even a thing) will go to crap. So please just put up with me on that front. I promise I won't give up on writing this story, but I can't promise when chapters will be coming out. I'll be doing another play through of FEA on my 3DS in the meantime to give me the inspiration to keep writing. (It's my 18th paythrough...yeah I need to get a life XD). I can't believe I'm saying this about FEA, but I'm running out of waifus to marry! It's the struggle I tell ya! Well, my antics aside, keep being awesome my awesome little bro army! (yeah...I just went there. ...BARRELS!)

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Chapter 8: Chapter 8

Author's Note

Ok, so I'm back after a fairly long break. I'm glad that Chapter 7 went over pretty well, I don't want to mess up the story's flow TOO much, but I feel that switching things up a bit is always a fun thing to do. And speaking of switching things up, this chapter is going to be pretty exposition heavy, so prepare yourselves. Don't worry, I won't go completely overboard with it, and I'll be sure to get back into the main story in the following chapter.

Also, this chapter is where I get to introduce one of my favorite male characters from Awakening up there with Henry and Owain: Lon'qu. He is just awesomatastic. (Yep, that is now a legit word.) So yay on that note. Also, something I've learned while playing Awakening on my 19th playthrough: If you marry Vaike to Cherche, and then have the female avatar who's asset is strength marry Gerome, then you get one heck of an OP Morgan strength wise! Like seriously! I made him a warrior and he just wrecked everyone's faces, destroyed the fibers of their bodies, snuffed out their souls, sucked out their very existence, and then beat them again as Risen.

***ahem* So, (a moment of silence please), this is my last chapter before school starts. So much sadness...but worry not, I will push through and continue working on this story as promised. The only way this story shall end is if I were to die in some random freak accident or something. "After all, no ship should go down without her captain." (I will give a digital cookie to anyone who knows that reference.) But enough talk of dying, and more talk of Fire Emblem!**

Chrom was still in a daze as Flavia led him into another chamber of Regna Ferox's tournament building. Flavia waved off her escort soldiers and told them to bring in some of Chrom's friends. After reaching the center of the open circular room with similar decore as the rest of the castle, Flavia stopped Chrom and slapped him on his unarmored shoulder with a hardy laugh.

"HAR! Now THAT'S what I like to call Feroxi might!" Flavia congratulated the blue haired man with a wide smile. "You fought very well out there, you have my genuine respect."

"Thank you Khan Flavia," Chrom started, doing his best to make light of everything that had just happened. "I'm just glad that Ylisse prevailed."

"And Ylisse has you to thank for it Prince Chrom," Flavia said, still smiling brightly. "Ah...and speaking of thanks, here comes some of your friends now."

Two of Flavia's honor guards escorted Robin, Frederick, and Lissa into the open chamber to congratulate Chrom. After the guards left, Lissa immediately ran up to Chrom, squeezing her older brother tightly, taking the wind out of him.

"UGH! Its...good to see you too, sis..." Chrom breathed as Lissa wailed into his chest.

"I was so worried about you Chrom!" Lissa practically sobbed. "I thought you were going to DIE!"

"Oh come on Lissa," Chrom reassured gently to the girl while lightly running a hand through her blonde pigtails. "I'm fine, see? There's nothing for you to worry about."

"Milord!" Frederick abruptly interrupted, while getting uncomfortably close in Chrom's personal space. "Are you unharmed?"

"Yeah Frederick, I'm fine." Chrom said, hiding the scar on his arm from his duel with Marth.

"Then I am at ease." Frederick sighed a breath of relief as he backed away from Chrom and Lissa.

"You sure did kick arse out there!" Robin said with a laugh as he walked up to take his turn to congratulate the Prince of Ylisse.

"Heh, so did Marth," Chrom said, while breathing easier as Lissa finally let go of him.

"Yeah, it seemed you two were pretty evenly matched." Robin said a little more seriously.

"You can say that again..." Chrom trailed off while thinking back to their duel. "It's as if he...well SHE could predict everything I was about to do. As if she knew me and my fighting style by heart."

"Hmm..." Robin thought to himself before continuing. "I wonder why Marth tried to hide her gender from us?"

"I'm not sure..." Chrom said before turning to Khan Flavia. "Would I be allowed to speak to her now that the tournament is

finished?"

"Unfortunately not," Flavia said, her smile somewhat fading. "It is a customary rule that duelist do not converse outside of the arena while still within the walls of Regna Ferox. After all, we wouldn't want any less-than-honorable secondary duels to commence with citizens caught in the middle. Besides, this Marth girl has probably already left by now."

"I understand..." Chrom said, looking somewhat disappointed.

"Aw, lighten up!" Flavia laughed, her usual demeanor returning. "You won! And more importantly, you've got your alliance!"

"Truly?" Chrom asked; finally smiling again.

"Yes truly!" Flavia laughed. "I shall personally see to it that Ylisse is supplied with the soldiers she needs."

"That is fantastic news!" Chrom said, smiling brightly along with Flavia. "Thank you Khan Flavia!"

"Heh, I should be the one thanking you, Prince." Flavia admitted. "It feels like ages since I've held full power. Oh, I can't wait to rub it in the face of that old one-eyed fool Basilio!"

"Err...Basilio?" Chrom asked.

"She means me..." a deep voice called out from behind them.

Startled, the four Shepherds turned around to face the ruler of the West half of Regna Ferox: Khan Basilio. The man's appearance was more to Robin's earlier guess of what a Khan would look like: his muscular body being reinforced by a suit of golden warrior armor and broad bare chest fitting the look of the dark skinned, eye patch wearing Khan perfectly.

"Shouldn't you be making some party decorations or something?" The West Khan asked Flavia sarcastically.

"Oh har har you old oaf!" Flavia snorted. "How does it feel do have your power snatched away from you like that? I bet it's enough to make your hair stand on edge...oh wait."

As Basilio rolled his one eye, Flavia continued laughing before turning to Chrom.

"I'll take my leave to go set up my 'party decorations'. Tonight, we feast!" And with that, the East Khan raced off to another section of the east side of the castle.

"Hah! Any excuse for a celebration, and Flavia's the first one there..." Basilio sighed as his female rival left.

"So...you must be the West Khan then?" Chrom said, introducing himself. "I am Chrom, Prince of Ylisse."

"I damn well know who you are boy!" Basilio snapped. "You're the arse head who took my throne!"

"Oh...well, um...my apologies..." Chrom said politely, trying not to escalate the situation.

"HAHA! Lighten up lad! I'm only blowing off steam." Basilio laughed, as Chrom stared at the man in astonishment at his abrupt change in tone.

Choosing to keep silent, Chrom let the Khan continue. "You're quite handy with a sword boy. I thought for sure I had picked the better man, err, lass."

"What exactly do you know about Marth?" Chrom asked seriously.

"Probably not much more than you, I'd wager." Basilio replied. "She was trying to get into the castle unannounced, but I caught her in the act. Apparently she's just some sellsword with delusions of grandeur. But she was able to knock my old champion out flat without even breaking a sweat, so there was no way I was going to turn her down. It was love at first sight...er, in a manner of speaking. But anyway, she's gone now; she up and left the moment the tournament ended with nary a word."

"Quite the fighter indeed..." Frederick said in his usual toneless manner. "Marth is the first person since myself that I've seen push Chrom to his limits. Quite an impressive feat to be sure."

"Frederick?" Chrom asked while a sly grin began to form. "If I didn't know any better, I would say you have a crush."

"Don't be absurd my Prince! A knight of my statute has no time nor need for such endeavors!" The knight said as his

cheeks turned a light shade of pink.

"Oh, is that so? I think your blushing says otherwise." Chrom said with a laugh.

Huffing, Frederick deadened his emotions and quickly regained his normal form, choosing not to continue the conversation.

Trying to lighten the awkward tension, Robin stepped in, "Well, if that's settled, why don't we stay the night and celebrate with Khan Flavia? Then the next morning we can head out back to Ylisse to report to Exalt Emmeryn of our new alliance."

Frowning at the tactician, Frederick said, "We have no time for idle frolicking Robin. The Exalt needs this information as soon as possible!"

"I actually agree with Mr. 'Cryptic Coat' here." Basilio said, eyeing Robin's attire. "The snow outside the gates of Regna Ferox has picked up considerably. I doubt you'll be able to get very far if you left out now. Stay the night with us instead. You can then leave at dawn break, since the snow doesn't usually fall that heavily until the afternoon."

"That sounds like a plan." Chrom said, nodding in agreement to Robin and Basilio.

Staring blankly for a moment, Basilio lit up again remarking, "Ah! There's one more thing that I forgot! I got a little present for you boy! Lon'qu, get your arse over here!"

At that, a dark haired swordsman walked out into the room from the entrance way that lead into the arena. The man's hair was so messy, it seemed to entangle itself, and his swordsman robe was unique to Regna Ferox and was something that none of the Shepherds had ever seen before. The robe had fur lining showing on its cuffs so the wearer could be comfortable in Ferox's climate. The man also carried a long, curved blade with a orange handle to it. The blade's deadly sharpness made Robin's heart run cold at the very sight of it. The man's face matched his blade: serious and deadly. His expression was cold and fierce, and Robin started to feel pretty intimidated as he walked up alongside Basilio.

Wait, that man was back there the whole time?

"This is Lon'qu, my former champion." Basilio announced in a somewhat booming voice.

The swordsman Lon'qu stared at Chrom, and then glanced over at Frederick and Robin, and finally to Lissa before quickly shifting his gaze away. He remained as still as a statue, and showed so little emotion, he made Frederick seem like Lissa in comparison.

Robin noticed the wary looks on his fellow Shepherds faces as the swordsman looked them over without a word.

"As you can probably tell, Lon'qu here isn't much for talking," Basilio said, as Lon'qu remained stoic and completely silent. "But he's peerless with a sword. I've never seen a better swordsman then him...well, until I met Marth that is. I'm honestly stumped as to how Marth beat him so quickly."

"Woah! Marth beat HIM?" Lissa exclaimed as she stared at the dangerous sword wielder. "But he looks so strong..."

Lissa slowly walked up to the man to try to soften him up to get him to speak. Lissa's plan worked, but not quite the way that she imagined.

"Stay back woman!" Lon'qu ordered fiercely as he jumped back a little in a defensive posture when Lissa tried to stand next to him.

"Hey! No need to be rude! What did I do?" Lissa pouted as she backed away from the man.

Basilio couldn't help himself from bursting out laughing. "Har har! Ah, good old Lon'qu! He never changes! Women tend to put him on edge, but nonetheless he is more than capable. In fact, he has the makings of a Khan in my eyes. You can consider him West Ferox's contribution to the war effort."

"We are grateful to have such a worthy soldier on our side Khan Basilio," Chrom began. "But are you sure you want to give him up? You two seem pretty close."

"Haha! You've got no idea Prince!" Basilio laughed heartily. "Me and Lon'qu have been through Hell together! But he's your man now. I'm sure he will be off to bigger and better things in your care."

Staring back at Lon'qu, Chrom continued, "And Lon'qu? You have to objections to this?"

Still as cold and stoic as ever, Lon'qu stared at Chrom for a moment before uttering, "You give orders, I stab people.

Period."

"Well fair enough then," Chrom said with a smile as he tried to make Lon'qu feel welcome. "Welcome to the Shepherds!"

Maribelle's heart dropped as she made her way to the Ylissean border village. Maribelle instantly noticed that several buildings and huts were on fire and had smoke rising from them into the clouds above. She noticed most all of the men of the village running around frantically trying to put out the flames and care for the scared women and children.

As Maribelle unmounted and grabbed her advanced healing staff, she heard from out in the distance a man yelling and giving orders to the other man tending to the burning town.

"Hmm..." Maribelle thought out loud as she stared at the man who was now standing on top of a hay wagon, shouting and pointing to the areas in need of the most assistance.

"That must be the chief of the village..." Maribelle said to herself as she raced through dry grassy plains to the village up ahead.

The man shouting orders momentarily stopped as he noticed the blonde aristocrat running up to him.

"Hey hold up there young lady!" the man warned as Maribelle stopped next to the wagon that the man was still on top of. "There's debris and burning wood and buildings everywhere. I don't want to see you get hurt."

"On quite the opposite end of the spectrum," Maribelle began as she stood directly next to the wagon to avoid being in the way of various civilians running rampant through the unpaved streets. "I'm here to assist those who have been hurt. I am a special healer sent by the Exalt herself to-"

"You mean Emmeryn?!" the man cried abruptly while cutting Maribelle off mid-sentence.

"You know of lady Emmeryn?" Maribelle asked curiously.

"That I do, but there's no time to talk about that. Here, I'll show you to where my people need your healing skills the most." the man said as he jumped from off the wagon and beckoned Maribelle to a burnt hut on the far end of the village.

"Your people?" Maribelle inquired as she ran through the chaotic streets of the nameless town.

"Yes, I am their leader." The man explained as they neared the blackened hut off to the right side of the main stretch of buildings. "My name is Timothy...might I ask yours?"

"Timothy?!" Maribelle exclaimed before catching herself as she thought back to what Exalt Emmeryn had told her before heading off from Ylisstol.

"Yes, that is my name." Timothy said in a confused manner as he was baffled to why Maribelle had been so shocked at his name. "Is my name truly that unpopular?" The man said with a weak chuckle.

"No! Of course not!" Maribelle said in a fluster. "I'll explain later. Oh, and you may address me as Maribelle."

"Maribelle?" Timothy repeated in a gently tone. "What a beautifully feminine name."

"Truly?" Maribelle asked, not entirely buying the man's flattery.

"Of course! I think it's a very fitting name to someone like you...ah we're here."

Deciding not to push their conversation any further for the moment in light of the more pressing situation, Maribelle rushed into the charred hut with Timothy to help the injured inside.

Maribelle couldn't help but gasp as she saw what was in front of her: A wounded mother with blood dripping down from a large gash in her forehead. and holding a small shirtless child with roasted skin and an open wound covering most of the child's chest.

"Please...help my child." the mother said softly as Timothy and Maribelle carefully helped the mother lay her child on a wooden bed in the corner of the cramped room. The child who Maribelle guessed was no older than 4, breathed in short, ragged breaths as he faded in and out of conciseness.

In a low, serious tone, Timothy whispered in Maribelle's ear, "Can you help the child?"

"I...I believe that I can." Maribelle said as she became overcome with pity for the helpless child. "Just give me some time."

"Ok, I'll get some bandages and warm water for his mother's wound." Timothy said softly as he quickly raced out of the hut.

Maribelle was in pure shock as she looked around the inside of the hut and saw the living conditions of the people living there.

The entire hut could barely fit more than 5 people in it, with only a small unlit candle in the corner for lighting, and a circular hole in the front of the building for a door. The small wooden bed that the child laid on took up almost half of the hut's indoor space with the right side of the hut having only a small wooden chair, a square shaped table with only the candle on top and a shelf mounted on the wall above it which was made entirely from fur and cloth.

The mother knelled down on her knees next to her son as she stroked his face with a tender hand, and then ran her hand through his short black hair. Maribelle quickly sat down next to the child on the bed moved the one cloth blanket from off of the child so she could get to his wounds.

Maribelle lifted up her healing staff and held it firmly over the boy's severe burns on his chest, and instantly a bright green aura began beaming from out of the blue gem-like sphere on the top of the staff. Maribelle stayed calm and still and channeled her mana as the staff continued to send bright pulses of healing energy on the boy's burns.

The mother gasped in astonishment as the burnt skin around the gash in her child's chest miraculously began to close back up with new and fresh skin taking its place.

"You're...you're an angel..." The mother said in amazement as she had obviously never seen a healing staff in use before.

"You flatter me mad'am." Maribelle said curtly as the last bit of the gash on the child's chest closed up. "There, all done."

"So...he's going to be alright?" The mother asked as tears began welling in her eyes.

"Yes, he should make quite the fully recovery." Maribelle said warmly as she smiled at the dumbfounded mother. "I would suggest you keep him asleep for the next couple of hours so he doesn't experience any residual pain or numbness when he awakes."

"Of course...oh thank you, kind miss!" the mother jumped up and grabbed Maribelle in a tight hug over her newly healed son.

"It was...hardly...any trouble at...all..." Maribelle wheezed as the mother began wailing into her well kept hair. Normally Maribelle would have taken offense to it and pushed her off of her, but considering the circumstances, Maribelle let her cry her eyes out.

Maribelle couldn't help but feel a bit of relief however as Timothy entered the hut again with cloth bandages and a bucket of warm water in hand. The woman reluctantly broke away from Maribelle and sat down at the table in the corner of the hut so Timothy could tend to her wound on her forehead.

"Are you familiar in the healing arts as well?" Maribelle asked conversationally as Timothy knelled next to the woman and carefully dabbed warm water on her gash.

"Heh, hardly." Timothy replied. "I haven't the foggiest clue as to how one of those staff things work. I'm just an average joe who was forced into a hard situation. I've learned to adapt with what the people need of me."

"Oh...I see..." Maribelle trailed off, as she decided not to continue as she was afraid she would touch a nerve.

Maribelle sat on the bed next to the sleeping child as she watched Timothy at work with the woman. Now in a more relaxed setting, Maribelle was able to take in more of Timothy's features; noticing his extremely curly brown hair, which entangled themselves in curl after curl. Maribelle then noticed the small patch of freckles on the side of his face, and his relative baby face in general.

Realization hit Maribelle as she took in just how young Timothy looked; he seemingly seemed barely beyond his teen years and had a surprisingly little amount of hair on his arms and legs. Maribelle then noticed how Timothy carried himself and his overall composure as he cared for the injured woman. Timothy didn't slouch his body like most people of his class do. He used very pristine gestures and moved like a trained aristocrat, and only Maribelle could tell the minuet details in Timothy's movements that signified him as a man of high class. Everything but his speech was dead

on to a man of high class. But that made Maribelle wonder why Timothy was living in a place such as this with as much ragged and torn clothing as any other villager who lived here.

"Annnnnndddd there! All done." Timothy exclaimed with a smile as he finished wrapping the bandage around the woman's head.

"Thank you..." the woman said hoarsely as she nodded to Timothy in praise. "It's already starting to feel better."

"I'm glad to hear it." Timothy said kindly as he turned back to Maribelle. "Well, it seems we've done all we can here. Let's move to somewhere el-"

"Chief! Timothy!" a villager called from outside the hut all of a sudden, cutting Timothy off.

"Ah, Richard! What is it?" Timothy said happily as he walked up to greet the lowly villager outside the hut.

"Great news milord!" the villager known as Richard exclaimed. "Look around you! Our men have been successful in putting out all the flames, and most all of our injured has been treated for."

"That is wonderful Richard!" Timothy said joyfully. "It seems that our village's spirit is still strong. I'm glad we had so few casualties."

"Thank Naga that it was only a small raid," Richard said seriously. "Hopefully reinforcements will arrive before ill fortune befalls us again."

"I hope you are right." Timothy said. "Who knows? Maybe we'll get the assistance of the Shepherds themselves!"

"The Shepherds milord?!" Richard exclaimed. "There is no way that Naga loves us THAT deeply. But I put trust in Naga, nothing is too miraculous for her."

"And I'll pray with you," Timothy said kindly. "But first allow me to tend to the loose ends here." Timothy said while eyeing Maribelle behind him.

"Very good milord, very good." Richard said before nodding respectively and racing off to another part of the village.

"You are friends with that man?" Maribelle asked as Richard raced away.

"Haha, oh Maribelle, I'm friends with ALL men in my village." Timothy explained with a contagious smile. "We are all one big family."

"That is...truly inspiring." Maribelle said genuinely. "It warms my heart to see even low class commoners unite in the spirit of harmony."

"Heh, I bet that there's a lot from us 'commoners' that you could learn Maribelle." Timothy said with a chuckle.

"I don't doubt that for a second." Maribelle said, returning a smile before growing serious.

"Unfortunately however, if things are returning to a somewhat normal fashion around here, I fear that I must make haste back to Ylisstol." Maribelle said in a somewhat sad tone.

"So soon?" Timothy asked sadly. "Come on, at least spend a few minutes with me at the village center. I would like to get to know a little more about you and how things are going back in Ylisstol."

"Well...I suppose I could spare a few minutes..." Maribelle said as her smile began to return.

Timothy showed Maribelle to the center of the village where his hut was located. It was respectably larger than its counter parts, but still not very spacious. Timothy opened up a cloth flap for a door and led her inside to a large wooden table in the center of the hut.

"Here, take a seat." Timothy said as he beckoned Maribelle to a small pulled out chair on the opposite end of the table to him.

As Maribelle respectively took her seat, Timothy asked curiously, "Why were you shocked at my name when I told you it earlier?"

"Well..." Maribelle trailed off as she was contemplating on how to word her response.

"It was because that was the name that Exalt Emmeryn mentioned to me as she was giving me the assignment to assist this village. She told me to give you her greetings."

"Emmeryn told you to tell me hello?" Timothy asked as he leaned back in his chair in thought. "So she DOES still remember me..."

"You and Exalt Emmeryn have a past together?" Maribelle asked curiously.

"That we do..." Timothy said, still lost in thought. "But it's kinda a long story."

"If I'm not over stepping my boundaries, I would love for you to tell it to me." Maribelle said, her interest peaked.

"Are you sure? I thought you said you needed to get back to Ylisstol."

"I'm sure Ylisstol will endure a few extra minutes without my presence." Maribelle said with a smirk.

"Very well then..." Timothy said as his green eyes stared into Maribelle's in seriousness as he began his tale.

"I guess I'll just start from the beginning; I was born here in this village back years ago. I never knew my mom, her heart couldn't take giving birth to me. But my dad was the chief of this village and a respected man by everyone living here."

Listening keenly, Maribelle let Timothy continue on without stopping him.

"However, when I was just a young boy, my father took a risk and temporarily left his village to take me to the beautiful city of Ylisstol. He told me that he didn't want me to grow up in the pitiful living conditions that he grew up in. He wanted me to strive for bigger and better things and to make a name for myself. So he dropped me off there in the streets of Ylisstol all by myself and headed off back to his village. I yelled for him not to leave me there alone. I didn't truly grasp why we just dropped me there and left me to fend for myself. I made a big scene as I started crying and wailing and screaming for my father to come back. But he kept on walking, he didn't even turn around to look at me. I could tell he was hurt at what he was doing, but he still left me there...all alone."

"I'm sorry Timothy..." Maribelle said softly as Timothy began to get slightly emotional.

Shaking off Maribelle's sympathy, Timothy continued on.

" I was just sitting there on my butt in the middle of the street, crying like a baby. A few people stopped to look and stare, but none of them did anything. They just kept on walking and ignoring me. I thought no one would hear my sobs, but then, when I felt most alone, she came..."

"You mean Exalt Emmeryn..." Maribelle said, putting the pieces together.

"Yes. She was standing outside her palace in the center of Ylisstol, and she heard my cries from a distance. I'm guessing that was must have had some sort of protection around her. Some sort of guards or something. After all, she was still a fairly young girl at the time. But she must have disobeyed her guards since she ran by herself through the dangerous streets of the capitol of Ylisse, and found me sitting there all alone, crying about my father. She grabbed my hand and pulled me up, and told me that she would take me to her palace and give me fresh clothes and a place to stay there at the palace."

"She let you live in the palace?!" Maribelle remarked in a much higher pitched tone then what she was going for.

"That she did, much to the disapproval of many of her guards and overseers. They said that a kid from the slums like me had no place in such a precious place such as the capitol building of Ylisse. And they were probably right too. But Emmeryn didn't care. She fought for me, and she let me have a special royal bedroom all to myself and told me that I could stay in Ylisstol as long as I wanted. Most of her overseers and advisers hated me for it, but I didn't care that much since I was living in one of the finest places on the planet."

"I knew Exalt Emmeryn had a big heart, but letting a lowly commoner live in the royal palace?! Err...I mean no disrespect Timothy."

"Haha, none taken. Most people back then had the same reaction as you when they learned that I was living there. Emmeryn educated me on various literature, and she taught me how to act proper in front of her overseers. It was pretty tough for me to master all of the movements and gestures, but after a while, I got it down."

"So that was it then!" Maribelle exclaimed. "I noticed how you carried yourself like a a man of noble bearings, but I couldn't understand how you learned it. Now it makes sense."

I'm glad I was able to get that cleared up for you. But anyway, I quickly became close friends with Emmeryn and met her brother and sister; Prince Chrom, and Princess Lissa. I enjoyed talking to Lissa since we were the exact same age, but she became slightly too annoying and flamboyant for my tastes. So I spent most of my time talking to Emmeryn. I loved her calmness, and her unyielding desire to help others. She was, and still is, pure peace. Chrom on the other hand, was very rash and aggressive, and he challenged me to play wrestle matches often. I couldn't get that close to the man, although he was nice, he did have a pretty angry side to him which scared me. Plus, he was becoming suspicious that Emmeryn and I were becoming too close, and he knew that neither of us were nearly old enough for a serious relationship. But even knowing that, I still cared for Emmeryn...deeply."

"And did the Exalt share your feelings?" Maribelle asked, as she was becoming fully immersed in his story.

"To an extent, yes I believe so." Timothy continued on. "But she would never show it as blatantly as I did. I would always do everything in my power to get close to her. I always loved being around her. Just her presence filled my heart with joy. But Chrom always stopped me from trying anything bold like a kiss, especially since even as a boy, Chrom was far stronger than I. So I did my best to show boundaries. But one day, Emmeryn did something that I would never forget."

"And what was that?" Maribelle asked.

"One day, Emmeryn called me into her personal chambers where she slept. She explained that she could feel the aura of people. She said it was a special talent of hers. She said by feeling the heart, she could read someone's internal emotions of their character and read what kind of person they are. She said she had only tried it on Chrom and Lissa, and told me that Lissa's heart read that she was the Striver of Love, Chrom was the Striver of Justice, and that she was the Striver of Peace. She said that was wanted to know what I was."

"So what did she do?"

"She told me to keep calm and to empty my mind. I needed to become one with myself. Once I did that, she put her hand over my heart and closed her eyes. The touch of her hand on my chest felt...special. I don't really know how else to describe it. But her eyes lit up suddenly as her hand left my chest. She told me that I was just like her: a Striver of Peace. I was at loss for words. She said that I was a very special man that could do much good in the world, even if it was on a small scale."

"Wow, I can't imagine receiving such a complement from the Exalt herself!" Maribelle exclaimed.

"Neither could I. We never really brought it up again, but I would never forget that day. But anyway, I stayed in Ylisstol for a couple more years until one day, I received a letter. It was from my father. He wanted to know how I was doing in life so far, and he wanted me to come visit him. I told everyone that I needed to go and visit this village again and see my father. Most of the royal family was sad to see me go, but Emmeryn most of all. The last words she told me were 'to carry my heart wherever I went.' I told her that I would return to Ylisstol, but for some reason, she didn't believe me. After saying goodbye to her, Chrom, and Lissa, I was off for my home village."

"So what occurred after you reunited with your father?"

"Well...that's just the thing, I never did. You see, in that same year, a deadly plague had struck this village, and the plague took my father like a whisper. I heard that he didn't survive for one full day after he contracted it."

"That must have been so horrible..." Maribelle said, momentarily staring away from Timothy in despair.

"It was. I was heartbroken when I heard the news. I never got to learn the full story as to why he did what he did all those years ago. Out of respect for my father, I took up the role of the new chief of the village, and the villagers had no complaints. I've been in charge here ever since."

Staring at Timothy for a moment, Maribelle got very serious before talking in almost a whisper.

"I shall let you in on a little secret Timothy..." Maribelle began. "I actually have great respect for people like you: commoners trying to make a decent living and have a big heart that wants to help others. It's more noble than the fanciest of aristocrats that I've come across. People like you are inspiring to me Timothy."

"Wow...I'm truly flattered Maribelle." Timothy said, while a small blush creeped on his face. "You know, you're not half bad. I think that..."

Timothy wasn't able to finish his thought as the villager Richard rushed into his hut looking as pale as a ghost.

"Timothy! Milord! Dreadful news!" Richard exclaimed, practically out of breath.

"Richard! What is it? What was happened?" Timothy exclaimed as he shot up from from out of his chair to face the horrified man in front of him.

"The Plegian bandits...they've returned." Richard said as sweat poured down the terrified man's face.

"No!" Timothy yelled aburpty. "How many?!"

"At least 30 milord." Richard said.

"Gods help us...there's no way we can fight off that many. Come on, I'll rally our men here at the village center. Tell them to grab pitchforks, logs, anything they can find. Even a laddle will do."

"Our men aren't trained fighters Timothy!" Richard yelled at him, overtaken by fear. "It will be a slaughter!"

"It will be a slaughter if we do nothing Richard!" Timothy fired back. "Now help me rally the men!"

After hesitating a moment, Richard did as Timothy commanded and ran off to gather all the men of the village.

Timothy quickly ran out of his hut with Maribelle behind him, and Timothy was suddenly gripped in horror at what he saw in front of him. The bandits had already breached the inside of the village, and several of them were throwing burning torches into various huts, setting them ablaze again. Women and children ran for their lives through the streets, and the bandits killed both women ad children alike, showing no mercy as they swung around their bloody axes and swords in a merciless fashion.

Richard was caught between a swordsman bandit while trying to reach a hut with able men inside, and the swordsman quickly ran the man through with barely even so much as twitching. Richard fell without a word or yell, and a pool of blood began to form in the grass around his crumpled corpse.

"Oh Naga..." Maribelle said horrified as she watched the carnage continue as she found herself unable to move along with Timothy.

Snapping his mind back into place, Timothy quickly grabbed a sharp wooden pike laying to the side of his hut and brought it up to defend himself as he backed up to defend Maribelle as well.

"Do you know how to fight?!" Maribelle shrieked, her aristocratic bearings completely shattered.

Timothy looked back at Maribelle as tears started forming in his eyes.

"No...not at all."

"Then run!" Maribelle ordered. "Don't try to be a hero!"

"No, you run!" Timothy countered. "I'll defend you while you escape. You need to tell Emmeryn and the rest of Ylisse what's happened here. Ylisse can no longer stand for things like this. Plegia's crimes must be brought to light!"

"Timothy, I can't leave you here!" Maribelle protested as she desperately yanked on the man's arm, trying to get him to give in.

"I'm sorry Maribelle, but this village is where I belong. Now go!"

Timothy shoved Maribelle off of him, and realizing that there was nothing else she could do, Maribelle started running in the other direction towards her horse out in the far distance.

Maribelle had the urge to turn around as she heard the grunts and cries of Timothy who no doubt was now locked in combat with the opposing Plegians. Maribelle fought her urge however, and kept running without looking back. Her resolve to not turn back was instantly shattered however, when she heard the high pitched scream of Timothy ringing out throughout all the village.

Maribelle couldn't help herself from turning around to see a beaten Timothy, impaled on the sword of his foe, as he fell to his knees as the sword pierced his chest through from his back.

Timothy stared up into the sky, and then his gaze shifted to Maribelle, who stood out aways, staring at him in complete and utter horror.

As blood starting running from out of Timothy's mouth, he was still able to call out to Maribelle in a weak voice, "Tell Emmeryn... tell Emmeryn I'm sorry, that I couldn't make...a difference..."

At that, Timothy crumpled to the ground, and the swordsman, the same one who had killed Richard, withdrew his sword from Timothy's chest.

Still polarized, Maribelle found herself unable to move as two axe wielding bandits approached her.

"Aye! This be a fine lass!" One of them sneered as he looked over Maribelle.

Agreeing with him, the other bandit joined in, "Yeah, we can't just kill her. She looks to important for that. Let's turn her into the boss. We might get a pretty coin for her head still attached to her body."

"Good thinkin'" The other bandit agreed, and before Maribelle could protest, the first one knocked her out cold by hitting her in the head with the butt of his axe.

As Maribelle slowly regained consciousnesses, she noticed that she was hogtied to the ground quite aways from the village. A bandit was carrying her over his shoulder and he was leading her to his horse to take her across the border into Plegia.

As the bandit lifted her on his horse and began his ride along with the rest of the bandits back to Plegia, Maribelle was able to take one last look at the smoldering ruins of the decimated village, and the poor innocents who had been slaughtered there.

"I'm sorry Timothy..." Maribelle called out softly as she rode off into the territory of Plegia.

Author's Note

YES! It's finally done! My poor little procrastination brain can finally relax! But anyway, this was a pretty intense chapter, and I know it was a pretty big gamble devoting nearly an entire chapter to exposition and even getting the back story to an OC. Hopefully the gamble paid off. It's back to the main story next chapter, things are about to get real with Plegia and Ylisse. I can't wait. Again, sorry for all of the extras in this chapter, I promise a lot of it will tie into later chapters. Keep on rocking my little Shepherd army! Nagaspeed!

Chapter 9: Chapter 9

Chapter 10: Chapter 10

Author's Note

Just when I thought things couldn't get any worse...

Well, I'm back again after another overly long absence. I'll get my sincere apologies out of the way first, and I want to thank all of you for sticking with me and continuing to read over these hectic several months. So, this time around, the reason for my "break" is that I'm moving! Or that is to say, I HAVE moved. Me and my mother have moved out on our own and our currently settling into a new apartment. That being said, all of November has consisted of constantly packing and stacking boxes and furniture, moving them to and fro, and situating everything. Right now, the place is still pretty bare bones, but hey! I've got a roof over my head and a place to sleep, so that's all that really matters. Although it probably won't start to feel like "home" until after the meat of the customizations are done, which will most likely be around the first of the year. But as you can probably gather, me moving, added with finishing up first semester of school (see rant in chapter 9 AN for details), has left me with literally no time to do much of anything.

However, with Winter Break right around the corner, I feel like I need to make things up to you guys. So I will be busting my arse in half over the next couple of weeks to do as much writing/uploading as my limited brain will allow. Plus writing is kinda like math: the longer you go without doing it, the rustier you become with it. Wait...math...school... (I just made myself sad now.)

Also, within what little time I've had, I've read back over my uploaded content as of now, and HOLY SWEET NAGA is it atrocious! GRAMMAR! You have failed me for the last time! *force chokes auto correct*. But seriously though, I see what you guys have been telling me and I now realize it to the full extent. But fret not! I intend to go back through all my chapters (especially 1 though 3) and fix a lot of the grammar, punctuation, and a little bit of the dialogue. However, since right now my focus is on pumping out new content, I probably won't be doing that until I get through "Part 1" if you will, of *Robin's Journey*. That is mainly for two reasons: for one, so I can focus on going back over and polishing things to the best of my ability without feeling pressured to write new stuff at the same time, and also since I'm kinda lazy. (Hey, at least I'm honest!) But don't worry, the major revision overhaul will be coming soon enough.

So anyway, most definitely my favorite part of Awakening was the unique characters and how they interacted with each other via support conversations and some story stuff as well. As such, you better bet your arse I'll be stuffing in plenty of character interactions and designing my own "C, B, and A" support conversations, as well as melding in some in-game ones for most all of the Shepherds. They won't be clear cut "Hey you! Wanna have a conversation?! I bet it'll make us become friends!" in your face crap like that. I'll be sure to make the casual conversations flow in with the story and/or have some sort of purpose. More than likely, I won't spend the time to do all the "S ranks" of all of the couples, I'll only have (at least) one reserved for a special someone. (wink wink, nudge nudge).

Oh, and speaking of, I'm loving all the guesses you guys have on Robin's wife for my story. I'll be sure to keep you guys guessing on that front with many waifu wrenches being thrown in there (like the end of this chapter for example, *cough*) Haha, you'll never knoowowowowoow! MUHAHAHAHAH Oh, this is gonna be fun!

Evil author mode aside, be sure to RR&NS all! (Read, review, and Nagaspeed).

"Robin? Hey Robin, wake up!" Lissa pouted as she was not making any progress with the fast asleep tactician. Robin had forgotten to close the tent flap the night before from his sheer exhaustion of studying battle tactics all night long after yesterday's march. As such, the tactician had slept in, and Lissa had volunteered to wake him up so the Shepherds could begin their march.

"Hmph!" Lissa snorted as she still couldn't snap Robin from his slumber, even while shoving his coat which Robin had not removed when going to bed. Lissa brightened up though, as a mischievous idea popped into her head.

"Hee hee! Well, if nothing else is working, I guess I can quiiietly...geeeently...hold your nose!"

The moment Lissa carried out her sentence and squeezed Robin's nostrils together, he awoke with a start, and violently shot up while taking in huge pockets of air with his nose.

"BWARG!" Robin yelled; still in shock of being forcibly awakened and unsure of where he was.

"Risen! Look out Chrom! Risen, and...wolves? WOLVES! RISEN RIDING WOLVES!" Robin yelled; causing Lissa to double over laughing uncontrollably from Robin's bedside.

"Chrom? Chrom where are...wait a moment... where am *I* exactly" Robin asked himself as he began to get his bearings and turned to see a still laughing Lissa.

"Hee hee hee...hahaha!" Lissa squealed. "'BWARGH'?! Oh gods, that was absolutely HILARIOUS! Hehehehe."

"What the heck Lissa?!" Robin croaked irritably as he jumped up from his bed. "I was sound asleep!"

"Yeah, and dreaming of my brother and Risen riding wolves apparently!" Lissa shot back as her laughter finally started to settle down.

"I'm sorry Robin, I tried to resist, but nothing else was working on you."

"But still, holding my nose Lissa? Who even does that? Is that how your parents raised you?" Robin asked with his arms crossed.

"Well...I...I don't know. I never really knew my parents." Lissa said honestly as her earlier happy spirits were instantly crushed my Robin's question.

Damn...I probably shouldn't have asked her that...

"Oh...well, er, that is to say..." Robin babbled out as he felt ashamed for making Lissa upset.

"Hey, don't worry about it." Lissa reassured Robin, noticing his embarrassment. "I know that you didn't mean anything by it."

Getting somewhat serious, which was rare for the bubbly princess, Lissa added, "And besides, there's something else that I should be apologizing for..."

"Well, whatever is it, I'm sure I can let it slide if you forgive me for that heartless comment." Robin said, smiling at Lissa.

"Oh really?! Sweet! That's a relief. I was SO sure that you were going to be SO angry..." Lissa trailed off before beginning again.

"So you see, you know that big tactical brainy-head book that you wouldn't put down last night?"

"Yes...and?" Robin asked, not entirely sure he was liking where this was going.

"Well, I was curious why you liked it so much, so after you fell asleep, I went over and picked it up and started reading it myself."

"Well, there's not much harm in that. You learn anything?" Robin asked; feeling more at ease that Lissa didn't do anything too crazy in his tent.

"Well see that's the thing. There were SO many big words, it fried my brain like a egg." Lissa continued.

"But I couldn't just leave your tent without accomplishing anything, sooooooo..."

"So?" Robin repeated, feeling himself get nervous again.

"Well, I knew how much the book meant to you, so I decided to make the book extra special by drawing a pic of you on the cover of it. But then I kinda spilled the ink and ruined the book...kinda, err...completely."

Sensing the nerves shooting through Robin's head, Lissa quickly added, "I reallyreallyreallydidn'tmeanto." all in one big jumbled word.

"What?!" Robin yelled as he looked over to his table and saw his strategy book, drenched from cover to cover in sticky black ink.

"Lissa! That was a rare text! And I was just starting to get to the good part about battle formations, and...and..." Robin started before letting out a sigh as he thought back to what he had said just moments before.

"...Er, *ahem*, I mean, it's...it's...fine. Accidents...happen..." Robin breathed, trying his hardest to contain himself.

"Aww, you mean it?! You're the best Robin!" Lissa said jubilantly. She then closed the space between the two of them in a flash as the princess grabbed Robin in a tight hug.

"ARG! Lissa...hugging...too tight...can't...breathe..." Robin wheezed out as he felt his coat practically meld into his skin with Lissa's tight squeeze.

Robin breathed out heavily when Lissa finally let go him and backed a couple feet away, still smiling brightly per usual.

"Hey well anyway, there was actually a reason why I came here," Lissa began.

"Please tell me it wasn't to give out more hugs..."

"Hee hee, no silly! You slept in big time! I think it's almost noon by now. You need to get up and at'em so we can get marching."

"What?! I've been holding everyone up? Why didn't you just say so?!" Robin half yelled as any sleep remaining in his eyes quickly faded.

"I was getting around to it, but I kinda got sidetracked." Lissa shrugged. "Anyways, I'll go get Stahl to help you pack up your tent. I'll see you in a few!"

With that Lissa waved off Robin and hurried out of his tent to met up with Chrom and the rest of the Shepherds.

"Gods, what am I going to do with that girl?" Robin chuckled to himself, looking around his tent to find where to begin packing up.

"It's about damn time Robin!" Chrom teased as Robin trudged his way to the head of the Shepherd line.

"Not now Chrom..." Robin deadpanned. "All within one morning, I've overslept, gotten my favorite book ruined, and even with the help of Stahl, took almost an hour to pack up my stupid tent which didn't want to fold up right."

"Shall I sing you a sob story?" Frederick stepped in with sarcasm that cut through like a razor blade.

Frederick being sarcastic...first time for everything, eh?

"Haha, laugh it up guys." Robin huffed at a smug Chrom and his knight protector. "Let's just get moving shall we?"

"Now's as good of time as any," Chrom agreed. "Shepherds! Let's get those horses and equipment moving! We're heading out." Chrom waved out to the back of the line which was being held up by Lon'qu, and in an orderly fashion, the group began their march back on the open trail and north road leading into Ylisstol.

"I'm glad we're back in a warmer climate now," Robin said to no one in particular as he starting marching in the front along with Frederick and Chrom.

"Heh, yes, it is a welcome change, that much is certain," Chrom agreed. "I've heard rumors that its snows even in the summer up in Ferox."

"Ugh, that's just horrible. If only there was some place hotter to spend your time at."

"Well, if we end up going to war with Plegia, you might just get your wish," Chrom said in a slightly sarcastic tone. "Nothing but sand and deserts over there."

"Well, that's what I got my trusty cowl for," Robin said, lightening up the mood a little as he playfully put up his coat hood over his head.

"You sure are fond of that thing, aren't you Robin?" Chrom asked casually.

"Yeah, I suppose I am aren't I?" Robin replied with a chuckle and started fondling his coat sleeves. "It's warm, its got plenty of pockets to carry all my tomes and books, a place for my sword, and its got a cowl to make me look like a badass. What more could you ask for?"

Chrom couldn't help but laugh at Robin's expressive antics, and even Frederick gave in to a grin as Robin hugged his coat tightly as if it was his own child.

I also feel connected to this coat too, like...a bond... Robin said to himself as an afterthought, while deciding not to let Chrom and Frederick in on that.

After a lengthy period of silence, Robin finally spoke up again.

"I'm going hang back and see how the rest of the troops are holding up."

"Heh, alright Robin." Chrom teased as he lightly punched Robin's coat sleeve before letting him walk off.

The sun beamed brightly in the sky as the Shepherds marched along bright green fields and pastures of flowers and trees. They were making good time, Ylisstol was less than an hour's march ahead at this point. Frederick had pushed the Shepherds not to stop for any breaks since relaying the information from Regna Ferox back to the Exalt was of utmost importance.

Robin had grouped in with Lissa and Sumia, and jokingly told Lissa to keep on the look out for more Robins; exaggerating the fact that they were marching through several open fields.

"Actually, on second thought, don't do that. I don't want any rivals for my place as tactician." Robin said with a grin, causing Lissa to laugh in her usual expressive way and for Sumia to smile at him.

"What are the odds of the Captain finding you like that?" Sumia asked in wonder. "Our Lord Chrom, coming to you, and bringing you in like that. He's so caring and friendly..." Sumia trailed off, lost within her own thoughts.

Yep, it's confirmed. Sumia is in love with Chrom.

Deciding to play the role of the mischievous bachelor, Robin spoke to Sumia in a smooth tone.

"You know Sumia, I don't know how reliable or not this is, but back in Ferox during the party, I think I overheard Chrom saying that he has a thing for woman who ride Pegasi."

At Robin's statement, a bright pink blush overwhelmed Sumia's features as she wasn't sure how to reply.

"Er, yes well...our Captain must have had a bunch of mead to drink. I doubt any of us was in our right minds during the party."

Trying her best to save face, Sumia then quickly excused herself from the conversation and walked back farther in line. Robin then noticed her take out what seemed to be a dandelion from her pocket, and starting picking off its petals one by one, while mumbling something to herself.

"You're cruel, you know that?" Lissa teased Robin, shaking her head at him.

"Haha, yeah..." Robin laughed awkwardly as he ran a hand through his messy hair.

The temperature had warmed considerably as the day was reaching mid afternoon and the Shepherds neared Ylisse's capitol ever sooner. Robin had moved to the middle of the line and walked alongside Miriel, Vaike, and Stahl. The tactician occasionally looked back behind himself to check up on a still stone faced Sumia as she tore through the petals of flower after flower while continuing to mumble silently to herself.

"Damn..." Robin cursed underneath his breath as he turned back ahead and continued his march with the center Shepherd line.

I probably shouldn't have teased poor Sumia like that... Robin berated himself in his head.

What is wrong with me anyway? Everything I've done since joining Chrom has amounted to using my big, fat mouth to get myself in trouble. First with Frederick, then at the gates of Regna Ferox, and now this...

Robin looked back to Sumia again as he considered walking back there to apologize and make her feel better. To Robin's dismay, that thought was shot down as Lissa had noticed Sumia as well and walked back to cheer her up herself.

"Perfect..." Robin sighed to himself as he watched Lissa put and arm around Sumia's shoulder.

Was this really how I was back before I met Chrom? Robin asked himself as his internal frustration grew.

I'm not truly this snarky, sarcastic bastard that I'm making myself to be am I? I have to have a serious side to me right? I know there's at least a darker side...

Robin fumbled in his coat pocket and pulled out from it his lightning magic tome. Robin briefly skimmed his fingers through the pages as he tried his utmost to clear his mind.

I don't feel it... Robin said to himself after a brief moment as he continued to feel through the pages of the tome and the encryptions melded onto them.

I don't feel that anger, that surging power...and most of all...I don't hear that damned voice.

"So it seems as long as I keep my cool and focus my mana, I can keep him out of my head while using magic."

"A most fascinating epidemic Robin. But do tell me; whom has managed to place himself within the recesses of your consciousness?" Miriel asked while looking over to Robin and his tome that was still in his hand.

"Wha-" Robin began before it hit him that he had accidentally said his last sentence aloud.

Robin quickly turned to face a still perplexed Miriel as he tried to think of a response.

"Err, hello Miriel." Robin began, still dumbfounded. "I'm just trying to figure out some magic stuff and how to properly...control it. You're a mage right? You know how it is."

Miriel still stared at Robin curiously as the two continued to walk along the open trail.

"I am indeed a wielder of the magical arts." Miriel began after a pause. "I have studied the art of it for many years. Although mixing your magic and your mana can prove to be quite the balancing act, I have yet to experience a predicament where I cannot control my magic."

After another pause and shifting her glasses into place, Miriel asked, "Would you care to elaborate Robin?"

Well, now's a good of time as any. Robin sighed internally, deciding to let Miriel in on his true problems regarding magic.

"So I assume that no one had told you about what happened with me when the Shepherds first encountered the Risen?" Robin asked, lowering his voice so the others wouldn't catch wind of the conversation.

"Only that you were the hero of the battle. That you had defeated well over a dozen of those foul creatures all by your lonesome." Miriel replied.

"Did anyone tell you *how* I managed to do that though?" Robin asked in a low, serious tone.

"...No." Miriel said plainly.

"Well, I was able to do it because I had lost control of myself." Robin began as Miriel stared at him in curiosity and fascination.

"I had become angry. Angry at Virion for not properly assisting us during the heat of battle. But that anger magnified tenfold as something seemed to...*feed* off of it." Robin explained, almost more so to himself than to Miriel.

"That unexplained exponential fury seemed to get translated into my mana, and in turn, my magic. Because of that, I somehow managed to use an exaggerated version of a spell that Lissa called Thoron. That's how I killed all those Risen."

Cold sweat rolled down the sides of Robin's face. His heart froze as he awaited Miriel's reaction.

To Robin's great surprise, Miriel simply aligned her glasses once more before looking again at Robin.

"Fascinating."

"What..." Robin began, baffled by Miriel's nonchalant manner to Robin's confession.

"Doesn't that disturb you? Doesn't that make you want to cast me away and find a way to kick me out of the Shepherds?"

"Oh, quite the contrary!" Miriel exclaimed. "You seem to have a connection to magic deeper than any person that I have encountered. This leaves endless possibilities for extensive research for the good of science." Miriel said jubilantly.

"For science!" The woman repeated as Robin didn't know quite how to answer her.

"B-but..." Robin finally began. "But don't you think this is a serious problem? What if I lose control again? What if I'm cursed to never have control of my mana? And once I do lose control, what if Shepherds get hit in the crossfire?"

"All the more reason to study this phenomenon and understand the source of it." Miriel replied, still unfazed by Robin's

pleas. "You had mentioned something about a voice inside of your mind before?"

"Um...yeah." Robin said cautiously.

"Most incredible indeed. Perhaps that voice is responsible for your unnatural power in magic. Do you know who the voice that communicates with you is?"

"Not a clue," Robin said honestly. "But he's definitely not friendly."

"Hmm..." Miriel looked at Robin in a quizzical fashion, lost in heavy thought. After a brief silence, Miriel began again.

"Robin, if I may inquire a favor from you..."

"Yes? What is it Miriel?"

"At the next available opportunity when Shepherds have down time, may you seek me out so I can run a few examinations on your...problem?"

"Sure thing Miriel. The more assistance I can have on this issue of mines, the better."

"Very good. I shall endeavor to brush up on the old text regarding the properties of magic and its usage in the meanwhile. Do stay well Robin."

Before Robin could so much as say a thank you or goodbye, Miriel veered off from walking alongside Robin and headed back farther in line as she pulled out a textbook from a pocket within her robes and began reading while marching.

"Thanks Miriel..." Robin said to no one in particular.

Chrom couldn't help but breath a sigh of relief as his Shepherds finally marched within the walls of Ylisstol after a long march. The city looked exactly as it did when the Shepherds left it: alive and full of peace. The sky emitted a light blue hue stretching for miles. It was a welcome sight coming from the gray covered skies of Regna Ferox.

The city was alive with its inhabitants as it usually was. Townsfolk and citizens from all over Ylisse gathered within the streets of the capitol, walking and talking, selling and buying. Children laughed and played in streets and alleyways which connected various houses together. The parents of the frolicking children were not far behind; mothers and fathers going about their daily lives, completely carefree as to the troubles outside of the city, such as the Risen and bandit incursions.

It warmed Chrom's heart to see that Maribelle and his sister had been able to keep the spirit of peace and security within the city during their absence. Before the bulk of the Shepherd line entered the main streets of the city, Chrom waved for them to all come to a halt. The Prince then beckoned for his tactician and younger sister to walk up to where he and Frederick were standing at the front of the line. After Robin and Lissa had arrived, Chrom called out to the rest of the Shepherds in his usual commanding voice.

"Shepherds! You are now free to roam among the city and the barracks as I take myself and my senior staff to talk with the Exalt. Do not venture out father than the outskirts of Ylisstol as we will receive our new orders soon. Dismissed!"

With that, Chrom lowered his hand, and the Shepherds quickly dispersed in various directions to go about their day. Chrom then turned to face Frederick, Robin, and Lissa that had stayed with him.

"Come on, this way to the palace. Emmeryn is still waiting on our report."

"Right!" the three Shepherds said in agreement.

"...Then Ylisse shall receive support from Regna Ferox?" Exalt Emmeryn asked finally when Chrom had finished his situation report from their expedition to Ferox.

After Chrom gave his older sister a smile of confirmation, Emmeryn couldn't help but smile brightly at him back.

"Thank you Chrom. I knew sending you and your companions was a wise course of action." Emmeryn said warmly.

"Ha! You should see Ferox's warriors!" Chrom said with a laugh. "With them at our side, perhaps now Ylisse can finally be safe from-"

Chrom's statement was cut short as a member of Emmeryn's royal guards burst through the main chamber doors. The guard was female, Robin surmised her to be a pegasus knight based on how her attire closely resembled Sumia's.

The guard quickly pardoned herself with a bow towards the Exalt for her intrusion before speaking.

"Your Grace! M-milord! I bring alarming news!" the guard exclaimed as she continued to catch her breath and compose herself properly in front of Exalt Emmeryn and Prince Chrom.

"At ease Phila," Chrom assured the guard before Emmeryn turned to speak to her.

"Phila, take a deep breath and steady your nerves. What has happened?" Emmeryn asked calmly, yet with a considerable amount of seriousness.

"Plegian soldiers have been sighted inside of our western border!" the guard known as Phila proclaimed as she tried her best to calm herself.

"They have attacked a village in Themis and abducted the Duke's daughter!"

The group reeled back in shock at Phila's statement, and Lissa's face turned to pure horror as she made a realization.

"The Duke's daughter?! But that could only mean..." Lissa began, almost afraid to finish her train of thought.

"Maribelle..." Emmeryn said in a low tone, completing her sister's thought.

"Chrom, we *have* to do something!" Lissa yelled at her brother as tears started to well in her eyes.

"Please hear me for there is more!" Phila stepped in as she tried to finish her report before Chrom's family went into an uproar.

"King Gangrel of Plegia claims that Lady Maribelle had invaded *HIS* country. He demands we pay directly from Ylisstol's royal treasury as reparations for this "insult"."

"And we are to believe a crazed dastard like the Mad King of Plegia?!" Chrom half yelled in anger.

"Peace, Chrom. We must keep our wits about us." Emmeryn said calmly to her now enraged brother.

All the while Robin stood next to Chrom, watching all of the events unfold, but deciding to remain silent to get a full picture on things.

"We ought to just put a sword and his gut and be done with it!" Chrom said frankly. "The Mad King has been trying to provoke Ylisse into a War with Plegia ever since the moment he first sat on Plegia's throne! The dastard won't stop until he drags Ylisse, no, the *WHOLE CONTINENT* to Hell with him!"

Robin couldn't help but flinch at Chrom's loud and brash statements, but still held his silence along with Emmeryn.

After a moment of tense silence, and Chrom had finished his rant, Phila broke the quiet.

"I have to agree with Prince Chrom, your grace." Phila said with a measure of caution. "We must demonstrate to Plegia that action such as this has consequences."

Emmeryn briefly nodded at Phila before turning to Chrom.

"Chrom, I understand your feelings on this matter. Truly, I do. But if we give King Gangrel the war he wants, then we lose, no matter the outcome."

Chrom let out a sigh before Emmeryn continued.

"Our last conflict with Plegia left most all Ylisseans homeless and starving. It all but destroyed the haildom. I cannot allow that mistake to be repeated."

"So if we don't go to war with Plegia, what exactly *should* we do?" Chrom asked as he tried to force down his frustration at Plegia.

"Hmm..." Emmeryn thought to herself in silence.

The rest of the room grew silent as well as they waited for a course of action by their Exalt and ruler. Emmeryn starred

blankly for a few more seconds before her gaze fell to Robin.

"...Robin was it?" Emmeryn asked the Shepherd's tactician as she starred at him. Robin, as well as everyone else was startled that the spotlight had suddenly changed to him.

Woah, I didn't see this coming. Just act natural and don't be an arse whatever you do. Robin told himself before speaking.

"Yes, your Grace, Robin is my name." Robin replied in the most respectful manner that he could pull off.

"You are the tactician and strategist for Chrom and his Shepherds right? I would love the insight of a person like you on this. What do you think our next course of action should be?"

What...she's putting this in MY hands?! I have haven't even properly led the Shepherds yet, let alone an entire nation!

Robin still couldn't help but feel a measure of flattery at the Exalt's request. Robin stood there in silence for several seconds as he tried is best to think long and hard at what would be the best course of action for the benefit of Ylisse over Plegia.

All eyes were on Robin as he continued to think of a response for Emmeryn. Chrom, Lissa, Phila, and Frederick who had been standing a few feet behind Chrom in silence the entire time all starred at the tactician.

Finally, Robin came up with something. *This probably isn't my brightest plan,* Robin told himself before speaking to the Exalt, *but it is the best that I can come up with on the spot.*

"Your Grace, I believe I have a course of action," Robin began, trying to bolster up confidence in himself.

"Ah, well go ahead Robin. What is your plan?" Emmeryn asked in wonder.

"I suggest that we offer parley with King Gangrel." Robin said, cutting right to the point.

Emmeryn raised an eyebrow at Robin's plan while mulling it over in her head, while Chrom looked to him in shock.

"You can't be serious Robin!" Chrom exclaimed. "The Mad King can't be trusted! What good will parley do?"

"What other options do we have Chrom?" Robin shot back. "Either we choose to march to a war that we will lose either way, or we sit idly by and let Plegia have their way with Maribelle. It's a no win scenario. That is something that I do not believe in. Offering parley is better than either than those other two options."

Chrom didn't reply back, as he realized he could not rebuttal against Robin's sound logic. Robin looked over to Emmeryn, and the Exalt nodded her head in agreement to Robin's plan.

"I now see why Chrom made you tactician," Emmeryn said with a smile. "Offering parley is now our best bet in diffusing the tension with Plegia. I should make preparation to leave for the Plegian border as soon as possible."

"Please your Grace, allow my pegasus knights and myself to accompany you for the journey to Plegia." Phila asked in urgency.

"I'm going too Emm," Chrom stepped in. "Someone here has to save you and Robin from your good intentions."

"Yeah, and I want to be there for you AND Maribelle!" Lissa joined in.

"As you wish," Emmeryn nodded to everyone with a smile of gratitude. "Thank you all, your power and mine shall be one."

"Well, then there's no time to waste!" Chrom exclaimed. "Robin, Frederick, Lissa, let's head out and gather the rest of the Shepherds. We should head out before the sun starts to set."

"Very good milord," Frederick nodded in agreement, and the four Shepherds along with Phila turned to leave the throne room of the palace to head back to the streets of Ylisstol.

As Chrom and his group were just about to leave out of the main palace doors, Emmeryn suddenly spoke.

"Robin, if you would please, stay here for a minute."

Robin and the rest of the Shepherds turned back around to face back towards the Exalt.

"Is everything all right Emm?" Chrom asked with a puzzled look.

"Yes Chrom, everything is fine. I won't keep your tactician very long."

"Alright, as you wish," Chrom nodded before he, Frederick, Lissa, and Phila turned back to the main doors and left the throne room, leaving a puzzled Robin all alone with the Exalt of Ylisse.

"Oh, don't be afraid, you're not in trouble or anything!" Emmeryn said with a laugh as she beckoned for Robin to walk back up to face her properly.

Even if I'm not in trouble, I'm nervous all the same...

Robin came to a halt several feet away from Exalt Emmeryn before she started speaking again.

"You know, I am quite surprised you had decided on parley of all things," Emmeryn began as she looked Robin straight in the eye.

"Why is that?" Robin asked curiously.

"Well..." Emmeryn began as she took in a quick breath.

"The last time I had spoken to Chrom in private before you and the Shepherds left on your expedition to Ferox, he had spoken of the bond that he felt with you. As if you were the brother he never had."

"Yeah, Chrom and I had talked about that ourselves on several occasions as well." Robin said casually, starting to feel more at ease around the Exalt.

"Well, I had assumed that the reason why you two was so close was because you were very much like Chrom. That you two would think alike." Emmeryn explained.

"As such, I thought that you would have his back and agree with him that we should go to war with Plegia. But instead, you went against Chrom's opinion and offered up your own. A more...peaceful solution."

"Err, I'm sorry your Grace. If I had of known that you wanted me to agree with Chrom-" Robin began before Emmeryn cut him off with a friendly laugh.

"Oh no, you did nothing wrong. I am just fascinated is all." Emmeryn said while smiling at Robin.

After a moment of silence, Emmeryn spoke to Robin again, this time with a more serious tone.

"I know that you do not remember much about your life before meeting Chrom," Emmeryn began. "That you don't really know who you are as a person. You are learning as you go. That must be very hard for you."

Robin looked at Emmeryn in speechlessness, as he was touched that she took such a considerate interest with his struggles.

"It is at times..." Robin admitted. "But you need not worry about me. You are the Exalt of Ylisse itself. The last thing you need is more things to worry about."

Emmeryn remained silent for a moment before letting out a chuckle.

"Thank you for your selflessness Robin," Emmeryn started. "But if I may exert a hint of selfishness on my part, I am curious as to your loss of memory and character as well."

Emmeryn grew a little more serious before speaking again, this time in a softer voice.

"I might be able to assist you to an extent Robin..." Emmeryn trailed off, her eyes still locked on the tactician.

"How so?" Robin asked in curiosity.

"I have...an ability if you will. An ability in which I can read one's character. By feeling their heart, I can understand the character traits that dominate your personality. You might be able to use that to understand yourself a little better as your regain your memories little by little."

"Wow, you can do that?" Robin asked in amazement.

"Yes, some mages here believe that it is a special type of healing magic that only I have been able to tap into and use. I have only tried it on people that I'm close to, such as Chrom and Lissa. The process is completely harmless, I assure you. Do you do not have to go through with it if you don't want to."

Robin starred blankly at Emmeryn as he thought to himself.

This may be my chance...my chance to truly understand myself! Once I know the man that I am, I can use that to adjust my actions accordingly.

"Exalt Emmeryn, if it would not trouble you, I would love to go ahead and proceed with your, err,... "spell".

"Ah, very well Robin." Emmeryn said as she walked a couple of steps closer up to Robin.

"Now, this process is very simple. All you need to do is clear your mind of all thought. Empty everything that would cloud your thinking. That way, your mind and body can become one. Once you do that, I will place my hand over your heart. I will only need several seconds to get my reading."

"Alright, I understand." Robin said as he swallowed hard in anticipation.

"Also..." Emmeryn began as she eyed Robin's chest area.

"Yes?" Robin asked, puzzled.

"I will need for you to remove your coat. I won't be able to read anything with that in the way."

"Okay..." Robin said in a slightly sad tone as he took off his coat and placed it gently to his side.

You drive a hard bargain Emmeryn...

Robin felt like I fish out of water without his coat as he stood in front of Emmeryn with his cream colored shirt completely out in the open.

"Now..." Emmeryn began as she took another step towards Robin so that she was now in arm's reach of him.

"Are you ready?"

"Give me a second..." Robin replied. Robin closed his eyes and tried to empty out his mind and calm his mana.

Alright, since this would be the damnedest time for that voice to speak up again, I gotta make sure to completely control my mana and still myself.

Robin began to breathe in longer, more drawn out breaths while keeping his eyes closed.

That's it...empty my mind...all I see is blackness. Total darkness. Pure peace...serenity...nothing...

Robin took a few more calm and drawn out breathes before softly speaking to Emmeryn.

"I am ready."

"Then let us begin." Emmeryn said calmly.

Emmeryn then stepped a little closer to Robin before extending out her arm and placing it firmly along Robin's chest to where his heart would be.

Robin felt goosebumps run up and down his skin at Emmeryn's hand on his chest. It felt firm and strong, yet delicate at the same time. Robin tried not to focus on it though as he did his best to keep his mind clean of all thoughts.

Emmeryn closed her eyes as her hand continued to lay on top of Robin's shirt. She felt his heart beat, and she felt it beat slower and slower as Robin kept his mind blank.

Several more seconds went past. Each second seemed to feel like an eternity as Robin was practically holding his breath at this point. Just when Robin thought that we was going to break his concentration, Emmeryn spoke to him in a soft voice.

"I am finished."

Emmeryn then took her hand off of Robin and backed away a couple of feet to giver Robin some breathing room.

Robin's thoughts flooded back to him like a hurricane as he stopped concentrating and let himself breathe normally again. He then quickly bent down to pick up his coat and put it back on.

"So..." Robin began as he put his arms into his coat sleeves. "What did you learn?"

Emmeryn collected her thoughts and looked at Robin, straight in the eye, long and hard without so much as blinking. Emmeryn did not speak a word, she just stood and starred at Robin with no expression written on her face.

"Emmeryn? Your Grace? What is it?" Robin asked cautiously, feeling his hairs stand on end as he practically held his breath again waiting for Emmeryn's response.

And then Emmeryn finally did reply. She did so in a low and soft voice, softer than Robin had ever heard her speak before. All the while she never tore her eyes away from Robin's.

"You're...like me."

"...How do you mean?" Robin asked, letting Emmeryn's statement sink in.

"You are a Striver of Peace. I person who puts the lives of good people beyond all else, even yourself."

"...Wow." Robin said, not knowing what else to even say.

"I've only tested one other person like that," Emmeryn continued. "And based off Phila's latest report, he is now more than likely dead..."

"I...I don't know what to say." Robin said honestly, still looking into Emmeryn's eyes; eyes with sadness overflowing in them like tears.

"You do not need to say anything," Emmeryn said, trying not to let her emotions get the better of her. "You can leave now, I have nothing left to say."

"Well, alright then..." Robin said, trailing off.

"Just..." Emmeryn spoke again, starring at Robin one last time. "Just please take care of my brother Chrom. Being an Exalt, I can't always watch over him. Please...do what I can not."

"I promise Emmeryn." Robin said reassuringly, doing his best to crack a smile.

Emmeryn simply nodded and then turned and walked way. Robin watched as the Exalt left to the further corridors in the back of palace, leaving Robin all alone in the throne room.

Although Robin knew that he should get going to meet back up with Chrom and the others, he lingered for a moment and put his hand over the part of his chest where Emmeryn's hand had been.

"That felt...special." Robin said silently to himself as he stood by himself in the large, open throne room.

I don't know any other way to describe that feeling that I just had, as Emmeryn was reading me...it just felt...special.

Author's Note

ARRG! Again, I'm SO SORRY GUYS! I should have had this chapter up a week ago, and now look, Winter Break is nearly half over. I guess life and lack of motivation have seemed to creep its way into my project of this fanfiction, and I should own up to that. I'll do my best to keep writing though during this next week or so. I do know how much content will be uploaded before the end of the first week of January. I want to have AT LEAST one more chapter uploaded before I start school again, but as it stands right now, I don't know what will happen. However, I plan to learn from my mistakes of first semester, and I will do everything in my power to work on my time management to balance school with this fanfiction. However, things won't be like how they were last time. I hope that there will be no several month intervals between updates anymore. But again, I want to thank you all for your continued support. You are pretty much all the motivation that I have left. I need you guys. Keep being awesome everyone. I hope to see you all soon in 2015! Nagaspeed everyone.